

Art of Ancient Greece



5-1 • Exekias (potter and painter) AJAX AND ACHILLES PLAYING A GAME
c. 540–530 BCE. Black-figure painting on a ceramic amphora, height of amphora 2' (61 cm).
Vatican Museums, Rome.

Art of Ancient Greece

This elegantly contoured **amphora** was conceived and created to be more than the all-purpose storage jar signaled by its shape, substance, and size (**FIG. 5-1**). A strip around the belly of its bulging form was reserved by Exekias—the mid-sixth-century BCE Athenian artist who signed it proudly as both potter and painter—for the presentation of a narrative episode from the Trojan War, one of the signal stories of the ancient Greeks’ mythical conception of their past. Two heroic warriors, Achilles and Ajax, sit across from each other, supporting themselves on their spears as they lean in toward the block between them that serves as a makeshift board for their game of dice. Ajax, to the right, calls out “three”—the spoken word written out diagonally on the pot’s surface as if issuing from his mouth. Achilles counters with “four,” the winning number, his victory presaged by the visual prominence of the boldly silhouetted helmet perched on his head. (Ajax’s headgear has been set casually aside on his shield, leaning behind him.) Ancient Greek viewers, however, would have perceived the tragic irony of Achilles’ victory. When these two warriors returned from this playful diversion into the serious contest of battle, Achilles would be killed. Soon afterwards, the grieving Ajax would take his own life in despair.

The poignant narrative encounter portrayed on this amphora is also a masterful compositional design. Crisscrossing diagonals and compressed overlapping of spears, bodies, and table describe spatial complexity as well as surface pattern. The varying textures of hair, armor, and clothing are dazzlingly evoked by the alternation between expanses of unarticulated surface and the finely incised lines of dense pattern. Careful contours convey a sense of three-dimensional human form. And the arrangement coordinates with the very shape of the vessel itself, its curving outline matched by the warriors’ bending backs, the line of its handles continued in the tilt of the leaning shields.

There is no hint here of gods or kings. Focus rests on the private diversions of heroic warriors as well as on the identity and personal style of the artist who portrayed them. Supremely self-aware and self-confident, the ancient Greeks developed a concept of human supremacy and responsibility that required a new visual expression. Their art was centered in the material world, but it also conformed to strict ideals of beauty and mathematical concepts of design, paralleling the Greek philosophers’ search for the human values of truth, virtue, and harmony, qualities that imbue both subject and style in this celebrated work.

LEARN ABOUT IT

- 5.1** Trace the emergence of a distinctive Classical style and approach to art and architecture during the early centuries of Greek civilization and assess the ways Hellenistic sculptors departed from its norms.
- 5.2** Explore the principal themes and subject matter of ancient Greek art, rooted in the lives—both heroic and ordinary—of the people who lived in this time and place as well as the mythological tales that were significant to them.
- 5.3** Explore the nature and meaning of the High Classical style in relation to the historical and cultural situation in Greece during the fifth century BCE.
- 5.4** Understand the differences between and assess the uses of the three orders used in temple architecture.

THE EMERGENCE OF GREEK CIVILIZATION

Ancient Greece was a mountainous land of spectacular natural beauty. Olive trees and grapevines grew on the steep hillsides, producing oil and wine, but there was little good farmland. In towns, skilled artisans produced metal and ceramic wares to trade abroad for grain and raw materials. Greek merchant ships carried pots, olive oil, and bronzes from Athens, Corinth, and Aegina around the Mediterranean Sea, extending the Greek cultural orbit from mainland Greece south to the Peloponnese, north to Macedonia, and east to the Aegean islands and the coast of Asia Minor (**MAP 5-1**). Greek colonies in Italy, Sicily, and Asia Minor rapidly became powerful independent commercial and cultural centers themselves, but they remained tied to the homeland by common language, heritage, religion, and art.

Within a remarkably brief time, Greek artists developed focused and distinctive ideals of human beauty and architectural design that continue to exert a profound influence today. From about 900 BCE until about 100 BCE, they concentrated on a new, rather narrow range of subjects and produced an impressive body of work with focused stylistic aspirations in a variety of media. Greek artists were restless. They continually sought to change and improve existing artistic trends and fashions, effecting striking stylistic evolution over the course of a few centuries. This is in stark contrast to the situation we discovered in ancient Egypt, where a desire for permanence and continuity maintained stable artistic conventions for nearly 3,000 years.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, long after Mycenaean dominance in the Aegean had come to an end, the Greeks began to form independently governed city-states. Each city-state was an autonomous region with a city—Athens, Corinth, Sparta—as its political, economic, religious, and cultural center. Each had its own form of government and economy, and each managed its own domestic and foreign affairs. The power of these city-states initially depended at least as much on their manufacturing and commercial skills as on their military might.

Among the emerging city-states, Corinth, located on major land and sea trade routes, was one of the oldest and most powerful. By the sixth century BCE, Athens rose to commercial and cultural preeminence. Soon it had also established a representative government in which every community had its own assembly and magistrates. All citizens participated in the assembly and all had an equal right to own private property, to exercise freedom of speech, to vote and hold public office, and to serve in the army or navy. Citizenship, however, was open only to Athenian men. The census of 309 BCE in Athens listed 21,000 citizens, 10,000 foreign residents, and 400,000 others—that is, women, children, and slaves.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND SACRED PLACES

According to ancient Greek legend, the creation of the world involved a battle between the earth gods, called Titans, and the sky gods. The victors were the sky gods, whose home was believed to be atop Mount Olympus in the northeast corner of the Greek mainland. The Greeks saw their gods as immortal and endowed with supernatural powers, but more than peoples of the ancient Near East and the Egyptians, they also visualized them in human form and attributed to them human weaknesses and emotions. Among the most important deities were the supreme god and goddess, Zeus and Hera, and their offspring (see “Greek and Roman Deities,” page 104).

Many sites throughout Greece, called **sanctuaries**, were thought to be sacred to one or more gods. The earliest sanctuaries included outdoor altars or shrines and a sacred natural element such as a tree, a rock, or a spring. As more buildings were added, a sanctuary might become a palatial home for the gods, with one or more temples, several treasuries for storing valuable offerings, various monuments and statues, housing for priests and visitors, an outdoor dancefloor or permanent theater for ritual performances and literary competitions, and a stadium for athletic events. The Sanctuary of Zeus near Olympia, in the western Peloponnese, housed an extensive athletic facility with training rooms and arenas for track-and-field events. It was here that athletic competitions, prototypes of today’s Olympic Games, were held.

Greek sanctuaries (see **FIGS. 5-5, 5-6**) are quite different from the religious complexes of the ancient Egyptians (see, for example, the Temple of Amun at Karnak, **FIG. 3-18**). Egyptian builders dramatized the power of gods or god-rulers by organizing their temples along straight, processional ways. The Greeks, in contrast, treated each building and monument as an independent element to be integrated with the natural features of the site, in an irregular arrangement that emphasized the exterior of each building as a discrete sculptural form on display.

GREEK ART c. 900–c. 600 BCE

Around the mid eleventh century BCE, a new culture began to form on the Greek mainland. Athens began to develop as a major center of ceramic production, creating both sculpture and vessels decorated with organized abstract designs. In this Geometric period, the Greeks, as we now call them, were beginning to create their own architectural forms and were trading actively with their neighbors to the east. By c. 700 BCE, in a phase called the Orientalizing period, they began to incorporate exotic foreign motifs into their native art.

THE GEOMETRIC PERIOD

What we call the Geometric period flourished in Greece between 900 and 700 BCE, especially in the decoration of ceramic vessels with linear motifs, such as spirals, diamonds, and cross-hatching. This abstract vocabulary is strikingly different from the stylized



MAP 5-1 • ANCIENT GREECE


The cultural heartland of ancient Greece consisted of the Greek mainland, the islands of the Aegean, and the west coast of Asia Minor, but colonies on the Italic peninsula and the island of Sicily extended Greek cultural influence farther west into the Mediterranean.

plants, birds, and sea creatures that had characterized Minoan pots (see FIGS. 4-4, 4-11).

Large funerary vessels were developed at this time for use as grave markers, many of which have been uncovered at the ancient cemetery of Athens just outside the Dipylon Gate, once the main western entrance into the city. The krater illustrated here (FIG. 5-2) seems to provide a detailed pictorial record of funerary rituals associated with the important person whose death is commemorated by this work. On the top register, the body of the deceased



5-2 • Attributed to the Hirschfeld Workshop FUNERARY KRATER
From the Dipylon Cemetery, Athens. c. 750–735 BCE. Ceramic, height 42 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (108 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers Fund, 1914. (14.130.14)

 **View** the Closer Look for the funerary krater on myartslab.com

(The Roman form of the name is given after the Greek name.)

The Five Children of Earth and Sky

Zeus (Jupiter), supreme Olympian deity. Mature, bearded man, often holding scepter or lightning bolt; sometimes represented as an eagle.

Hera (Juno), goddess of marriage. Sister/wife of Zeus. Mature woman; cow and peacock are sacred to her.

Hestia (Vesta), goddess of the hearth. Sister of Zeus. Her sacred flame burned in communal hearths.

Poseidon (Neptune), god of the sea. Holds a three-pronged spear (trident).

Hades (Pluto), god of the underworld, the dead, and wealth.

The Seven Sky Gods, Offspring of the First Five

Ares (Mars), god of war. Son of Zeus and Hera.

Hephaistos (Vulcan), god of the forge, fire, and metal handicrafts. Son of Hera (in some myths, also of Zeus); husband of Aphrodite.

Apollo (Phoebus), god of the sun, light, truth, music, archery, and healing. Sometimes identified with Helios (the Sun), who rides a chariot across the daytime sky. Son of Zeus and Leto (a descendant of Earth); brother of Artemis.

Artemis (Diana), goddess of the hunt, wild animals, and the moon. Sometimes identified with Selene (the Moon), who rides a chariot or oxcart across the night sky. Daughter of Zeus and Leto; sister of Apollo. Carries bow and arrows and is accompanied by hunting dogs.

Athena (Minerva), goddess of wisdom, war, victory, and the city. Also goddess of handicrafts and other artistic skills. Daughter of Zeus; sprang fully grown from his head. Wears helmet and carries shield and spear.

Aphrodite (Venus), goddess of love. Daughter of Zeus and the water nymph Dione; alternatively, born of sea foam; wife of Hephaistos.

Hermes (Mercury), messenger of the gods, god of fertility and luck, guide of the dead to the underworld, and god of thieves and commerce. Son of Zeus and Maia, the daughter of Atlas, a Titan who supports the sky on his shoulders. Wears winged sandals and hat; carries caduceus, a wand with two snakes entwined around it.

Other Important Deities

Demeter (Ceres), goddess of grain and agriculture. Daughter of Kronos and Rhea, sister of Zeus and Hera.

Persephone (Proserpina), goddess of fertility and queen of the underworld. Wife of Hades; daughter of Demeter.

Dionysos (Bacchus), god of wine, the grape harvest, and inspiration. His female followers are called **maenads** (Bacchantes).

Eros (Cupid), god of love. In some myths, the son of Aphrodite. Shown as an infant or young boy, sometimes winged, carrying bow and arrows.

Pan (Faunus), protector of shepherds, god of the wilderness and of music. Half-man, half-goat, he carries panpipes.

Nike (Victory), goddess of victory. Often shown winged and flying.

is depicted laying on its side atop a funeral bier, perhaps awaiting the relatively new Greek practice of cremation. Male and female figures stand on each side of the body, their arms raised and both hands placed on top of their heads in a gesture of anguish, as if these mourners were literally tearing their hair out with grief. In the register underneath, horse-drawn chariots and footsoldiers, who look like walking shields with tiny antlike heads and muscular legs, move in solemn procession.

The geometric shapes used to represent human figures on this pot—triangles for torsos; more triangles for the heads in profile; round dots for eyes; long, thin rectangles for arms; tiny waists; and long legs with bulging thigh and calf muscles—are what has given the Geometric style its name. Figures are shown in either full-frontal or full-profile views that emphasize flat patterns and crisp outlines. Any sense of the illusion of three-dimensional forms occupying real space has been avoided. But the artist has captured a deep sense of human loss by exploiting the stylized solemnity and strong rhythmic accents of the carefully arranged elements.

5-3 • MAN AND CENTAUR

Perhaps from Olympia. c. 750 BCE. Bronze, height $4\frac{5}{16}$ " (11.1 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917. (17.190.2072)



Egyptian funerary art reflected the strong belief that the dead, in the afterworld, could continue to engage in activities they enjoyed while alive. For the Greeks, the deceased entered a place of mystery and obscurity that living humans could not define precisely, and their funerary art, in contrast, focused on the emotional reactions of the survivors. The scene of human mourning on this pot contains no supernatural beings, nor any identifiable reference to an afterlife, only poignant evocations of the sentiments and rituals of those left behind on earth.

Greek artists of the Geometric period also produced figurines of wood, ivory, clay, and cast bronze. These small statues of humans and animals are similar in appearance to those painted on pots. A tiny bronze of this type, depicting a **MAN AND CENTAUR**—a mythical creature, part man and part horse (**FIG. 5-3**)—dates to about the same time as the funerary krater. Although there were wise and good centaurs in Greek lore, this work takes up the theme of battling man and centaur, prominent throughout the history of Greek art (see **FIG. 5-38**). The two figures confront each other after the man—perhaps Herakles—has stabbed the centaur; the spearhead is visible on the centaur’s left side. Like the painter of the contemporary funerary krater, the sculptor has distilled the body parts of these figures to elemental geometric shapes, arranging them in a composition of solid forms and open, or negative, spaces that makes the piece interesting from multiple viewpoints. Most such sculptures have been found in sanctuaries, suggesting that they may have served as votive offerings to the gods.

THE ORIENTALIZING PERIOD

By the seventh century BCE, painters in major pottery centers in Greece had moved away from the dense linear decoration of the Geometric style, preferring more open compositions built around large motifs—real and imaginary animals, abstract plant forms, and human figures. The source of these motifs can be traced to the arts of the Near East, Asia Minor, and Egypt. Greek painters did not simply copy the work of Eastern artists, however. Instead, they drew on work in a variety of media—including sculpture, metalwork, and textiles—to invent an entirely new approach to painting vessels.

The Orientalizing style (c. 700–600 BCE) began in Corinth, a port city where luxury wares from the Near East and Egypt inspired artists. The new style is evident in a Corinthian **olpe**, or wide-mouthed pitcher, dating to about 650–625 BCE (**FIG. 5-4**). Silhouetted creatures—lions, panthers, goats, deer, bulls, boars, and swans—stride in horizontal bands against a light background with stylized flower forms called **rosettes** filling the spaces around them. An early example of the **black-figure** technique (see “Black-Figure and Red-Figure,” page 118), dark shapes define the silhouettes of the animals against a background of very pale buff, the natural color of the Corinthian clay. The artist incised fine details inside the silhouetted shapes with a sharp tool and added touches of white and red slip to enliven the design.



5-4 • OLPE (PITCHER)

Corinth. c. 650–625 BCE. Ceramic with black-figure decoration, height 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (32.8 cm). J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu.

THE ARCHAIC PERIOD, c. 600–480 BCE

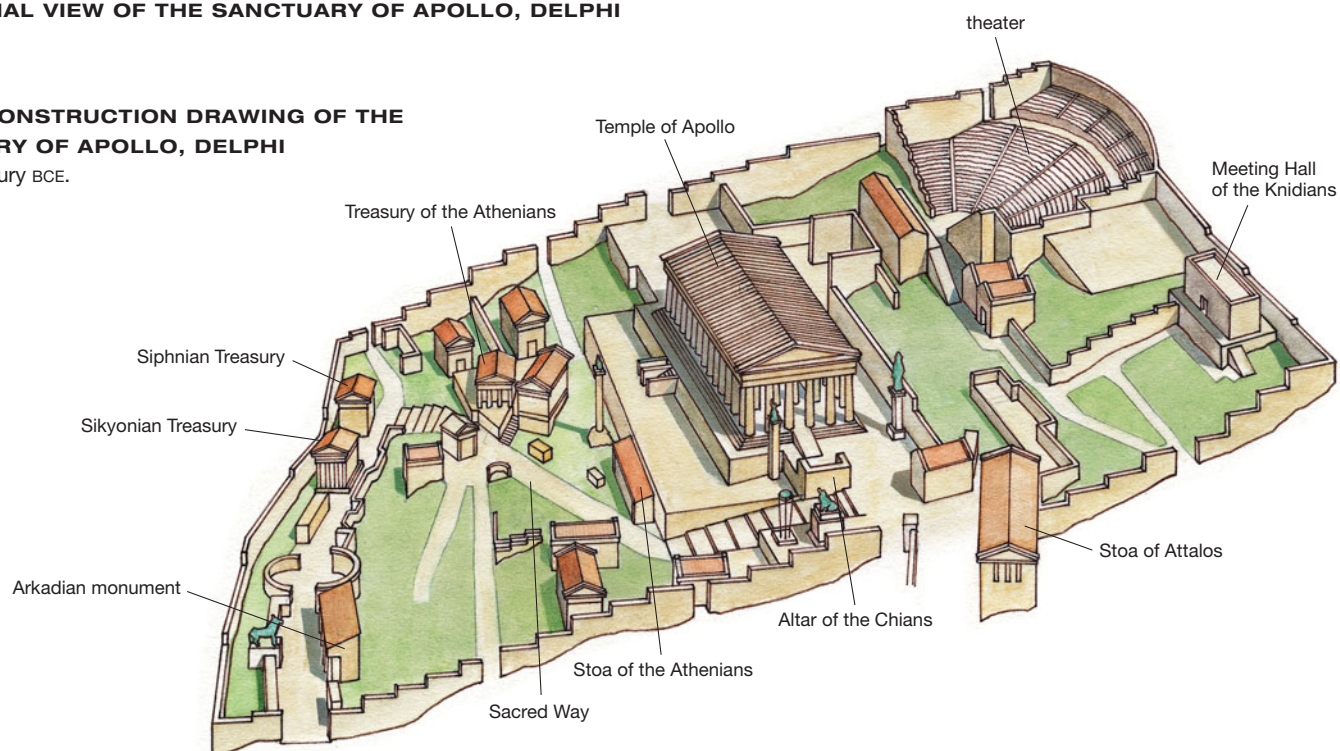
The Archaic period does not deserve its name. “Archaic” means “antiquated” or “old-fashioned,” even “primitive,” and the term was chosen by art historians who wanted to stress what they perceived as a contrast between the undeveloped art of this time and the subsequent Classical period, once thought to be the most admirable and highly developed phase of Greek art. But the Archaic period was a time of great new achievement in Greece. In literature, Sappho wrote her inspired poetry on the island of Lesbos, while on another island the legendary storyteller, Aesop, crafted his animal fables. Artists and architects shared in the growing prosperity



5-5 • AERIAL VIEW OF THE SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, DELPHI

**5-6 • RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF THE
SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, DELPHI**

6th–3rd century BCE.



as city councils and wealthy individuals sponsored the creation of extraordinary sculpture and fine ceramics and commissioned elaborate civic and religious buildings in cities and sanctuaries.

THE SANCTUARY AT DELPHI

According to Greek myth, Zeus was said to have released two eagles from opposite ends of the earth and they met exactly at the rugged mountain site of Apollo's sanctuary (FIG. 5-5). From very early times, the sanctuary at Delphi was renowned as an oracle, a place where the god Apollo was believed to communicate with humans by means of cryptic messages delivered through a human intermediary, or medium (the Pythia). The Greeks and their leaders routinely sought advice at oracles, and attributed many twists of fate to misinterpretations of the Pythia's statements. Even foreign rulers journeyed to request help at Delphi.

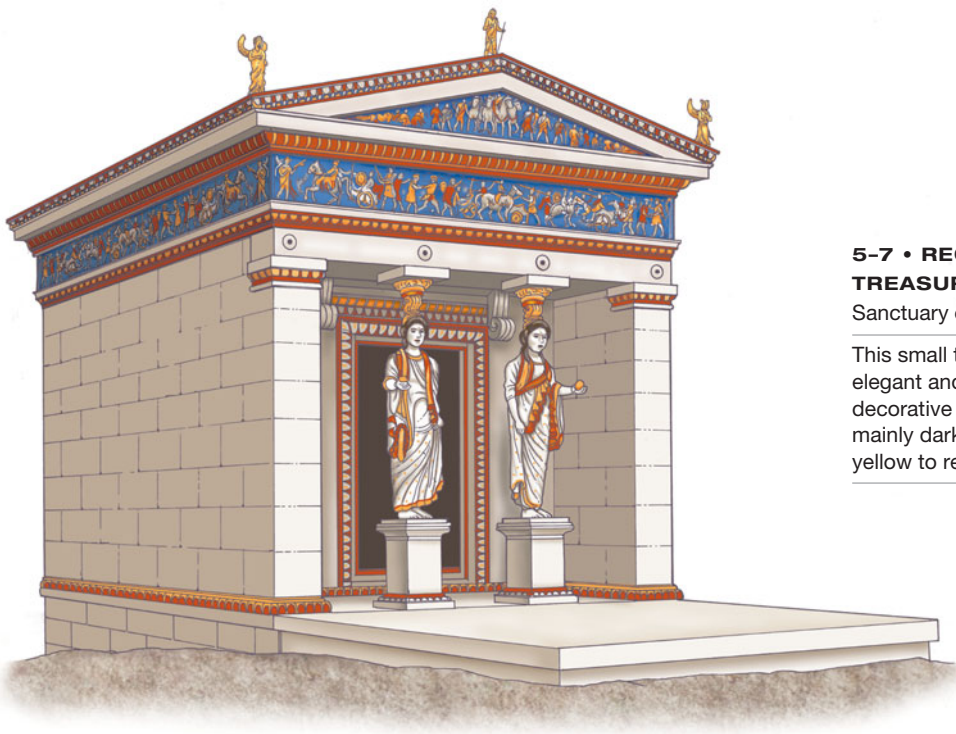
Delphi was the site of the Pythian Games which, like the Olympic Games, attracted participants from all over Greece. The principal events were the athletic contests and the music, dance, and poetry competitions in honor of Apollo. As at Olympia, hundreds of statues dedicated to the victors of the competitions, as well as mythological figures, filled the sanctuary grounds. The sanctuary of Apollo was significantly developed during the Archaic period and included the main temple, performance and athletic areas, treasuries, and other buildings and monuments, which made full use of limited space on the hillside (FIG. 5-6).

After visitors had climbed the steep path up the lower slopes of Mount Parnassos, they entered the sanctuary by a ceremonial gate in the southeast corner. From there they zigzagged up the Sacred Way, so named because it was the route of religious processions

during festivals. Moving past the numerous treasuries and memorials built by the city-states, they arrived at the long colonnade of the Temple of Apollo, rebuilt in c. 530 BCE on the site of an earlier temple. Below the temple was a **stoa**, a columned pavilion open on three sides, built by the people of Athens. There visitors rested, talked, or watched ceremonial dancing. At the top of the sanctuary hill was a stadium area for athletic contests.

TREASURY OF THE SIPHNIANS Sanctuaries also included treasuries built by the citizens of Greek city-states to house and protect their offerings. The small but luxurious **TREASURY OF THE SIPHNIANS** (FIG. 5-7) was built in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi by the residents of the island of Siphnos in the Cyclades, between about 530 and 525 BCE. It survives today only in fragments housed in the museum at Delphi. Instead of columns, the builders used two stately **caryatids**—columns carved in the form of clothed women in finely pleated, flowing garments, raised on **pedestals** and balancing elaborately carved capitals on their heads. The capitals support a tall **entablature** conforming to the **Ionic order**, which features a plain, or three-panel, **architrave** and a continuous carved **frieze**, set off by richly carved moldings (see “The Greek Orders,” page 110).

Both the continuous frieze and the **pediments** of the Siphnian Treasury were originally filled with relief sculpture. A surviving section of the frieze from the building's north side, which shows a scene from the legendary **BATTLE BETWEEN THE GODS AND THE GIANTS**, is notable for its complex representation of space (FIG. 5-8). To give a sense of three-dimensional recession, the sculptors overlapped the figures—sometimes three deep—varying



5-7 • RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF THE TREASURY OF THE SIPHNIANS

Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi. c. 530–525 BCE.

This small treasury building at Delphi was originally elegant and richly ornamented. The figure sculpture and decorative moldings were once painted in strong colors, mainly dark blue, bright red, and white, with touches of yellow to resemble gold.



5-8 • BATTLE BETWEEN THE GODS AND THE GIANTS

Fragments of the north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians, Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi. c. 530–525 BCE. Marble, height 26" (66 cm). Archaeological Museum, Delphi.

the depth of the relief to allow viewers to grasp their placement within space. Originally such sculptures were painted with bright color to enhance the lifelike effect.

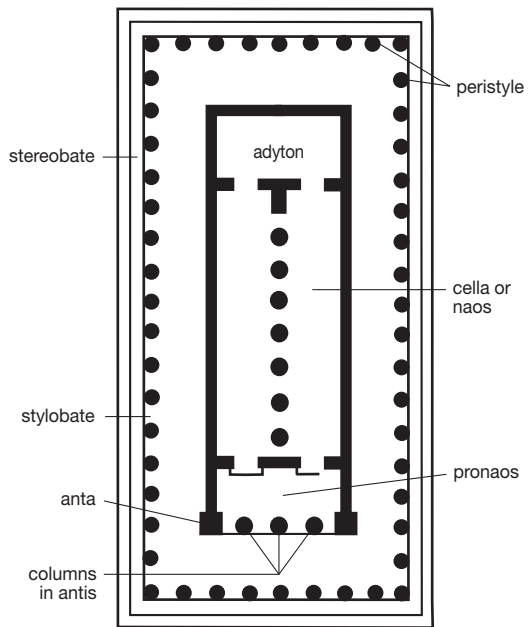
TEMPLES

For centuries ancient Greeks had worshiped at sanctuaries where an outdoor altar stood within an enclosed sacred area called a **temenos** reserved for worship. Sometimes temples sheltering a statue of a god were incorporated into these sanctuaries, often later additions to an established sanctuary. A number of standardized temple plans evolved, ranging from simple, one-room structures with columned **porches** (covered, open space in front of an entrance) to buildings with double porches (front and back), surrounded entirely by columns. Builders also experimented with the design of temple **elevations**—the arrangement, proportions, and appearance of the columns and the lintels, which now grew into elaborate entablatures. Two elevation designs emerged during the Archaic period: the **Doric order** and the Ionic order. The **Corinthian order**, a variant of the Ionic order, would develop later (see “The Greek Orders,” page 110).

A particularly well-preserved Archaic Doric temple, built around 550 BCE, still stands at the former Greek colony of Poseidonia (Roman Paestum) about 50 miles south of the modern city of Naples, Italy (FIG. 5-9). Dedicated to Hera, the wife of Zeus, it is known today as Hera I to distinguish it from a second, adjacent temple to Hera built about a century later. A row of columns called the peristyle surrounded the main room, the **cella**. The columns of Hera I are especially robust—only about four times as high as their maximum diameter—and topped with a widely flaring capital and a broad, blocky **abacus**, creating an impression of great stability and permanence. As the column shafts rise, they

swell in the middle and contract again toward the top, a refinement known as **entasis**, giving them a sense of energy and lift. Hera I has an uneven number of columns—nine—across the short ends of the peristyle, with a column instead of a space at the center of the two ends. The entrance to the **pronaos** (enclosed vestibule) has three columns in antis (between flanking wall piers), and a row of columns runs down the center of the wide **cella** to help support the ceiling and roof. The unusual two-aisle, two-door arrangement leading to the small room at the end of the **cella** proper suggests that the temple had two presiding deities: either Hera and Poseidon (patron of the city), or Hera and Zeus, or perhaps Hera in her two manifestations (as warrior and protector of the city and as mother and protector of children).

THE TEMPLE OF APHAIA ON AEGINA A fully developed and somewhat sleeker Doric temple—part of a sanctuary dedicated to a local goddess named Aphaia—was built on the island of Aegina during the first quarter of the fifth century BCE (FIG. 5-10). Spectacularly sited on a hill overlooking the sea, the temple is reasonably well preserved, in spite of the loss of pediments, roof, and sections of its colonnade. Enough evidence remains to form a reliable reconstruction of its original appearance (FIG. 5-11). The plan combines six columns on the façades with 12 on the sides, and the **cella**—whose roof was supported by superimposed colonnades—could be entered from porches on both short sides. The slight swelling of the columns (entasis) seen at Poseidonia is evident here as well, and the outside triglyphs are pushed to the ends of frieze, out of alignment with the column underneath them, to avoid the awkwardness of half a metope (rectangular panel with a relief or painting) at the corner.



5-9 • PLAN (A) AND EXTERIOR VIEW (B) OF THE TEMPLE OF HERA I, POSEIDONIA (ROMAN PAESTUM)
Southern Italy. c. 550–540 BCE.



5-10 • TEMPLE OF APHAIA, AEGINA
View from the east. c. 500 or c. 475 BCE. Column height about 17' (5.18 m).

ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE | The Greek Orders

Each of the three Classical Greek architectural **orders**—Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—constitutes a system of interdependent parts whose proportions are based on mathematical ratios. No element of an order could be changed without producing a corresponding change in other elements.

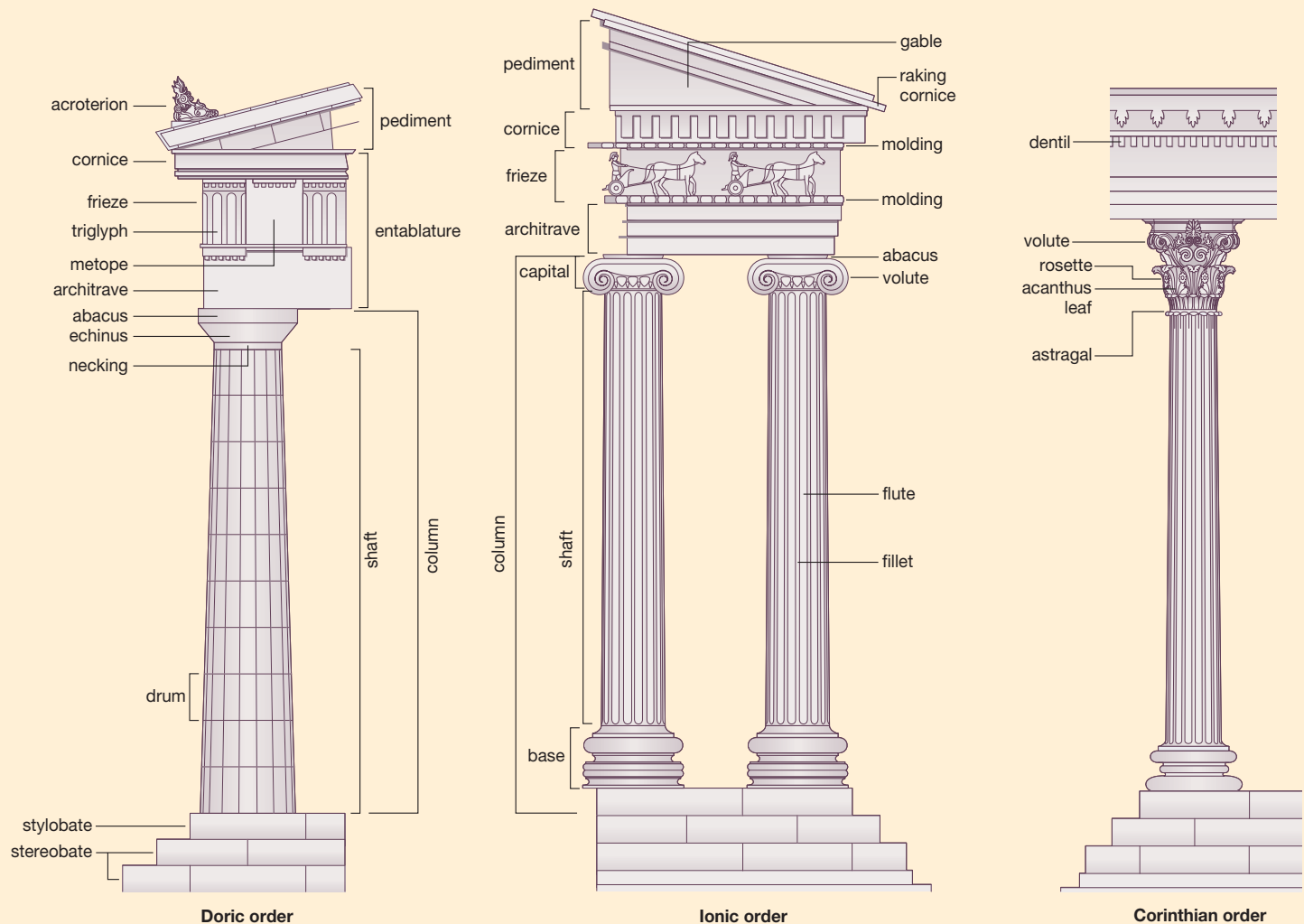
The basic components are the **column** and the entablature, which function as post and lintel in the structural system. All three types of columns have a **shaft** and a **capital**; Ionic and Corinthian also have a base. The shafts are formed of stacked round sections, or **drums**, which are joined inside by metal pegs. In Greek temple architecture, columns stand on the **stylobate**, the “floor” of the temple, which rests on top of a set of steps that form the temple’s base, known as the **stereobate**.

In the Doric order, shafts sit directly on the stylobate, without a base. They are **fluted**, or channeled, with sharp edges. The height of the substantial columns ranges from five-and-a-half to seven times the diameter of the base. A necking at the top of the shaft provides a

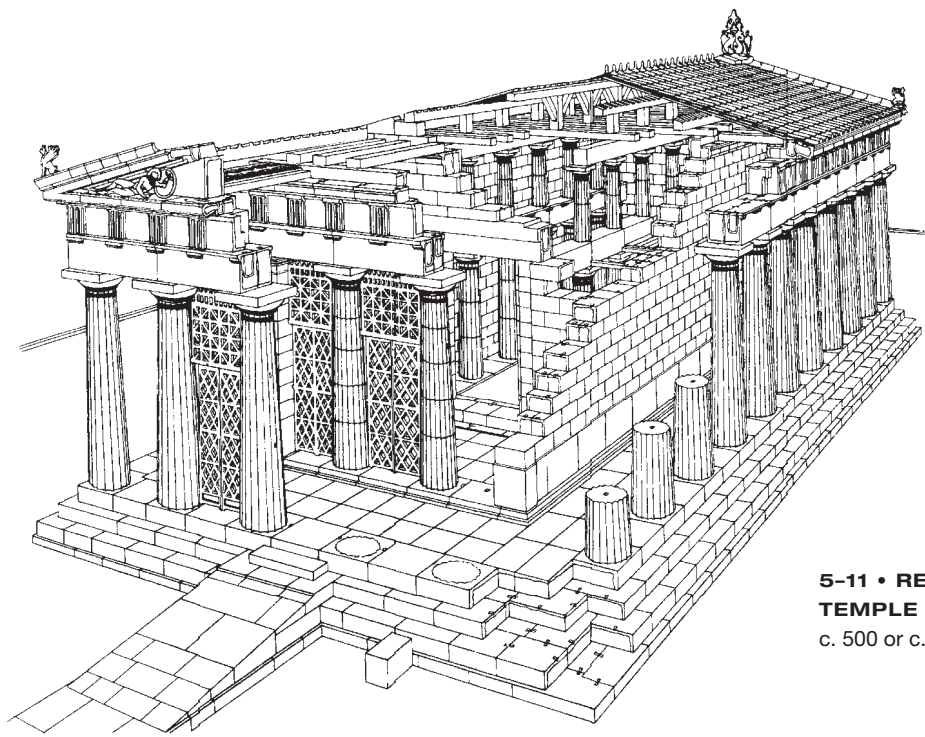
transition to the capital itself, composed of the rounded **echinus**, and the tabletlike **abacus**. The entablature includes the architrave, the distinctive frieze of alternating **triglyphs** and **metopes**, and the **cornice**, the topmost, projecting horizontal element. The roofline may have decorative waterspouts and terminal decorative elements called **acroteria**.

The Ionic order has more elongated proportions than the Doric, the height of a column being about nine times the diameter of its base. The flutes on the columns are deeper and are separated by flat surfaces called **fillets**. The capital has a distinctive spiral scrolled **volute**; the entablature has a three-panel architrave, continuous sculptured or decorated frieze, and richer decorative moldings.

The Corinthian order, a variant of the Ionic order originally developed by the Greeks for use in interiors, was eventually used on temple exteriors as well. Its elaborate capitals are sheathed with stylized **acanthus** leaves that rise from a convex band called the **astragal**.



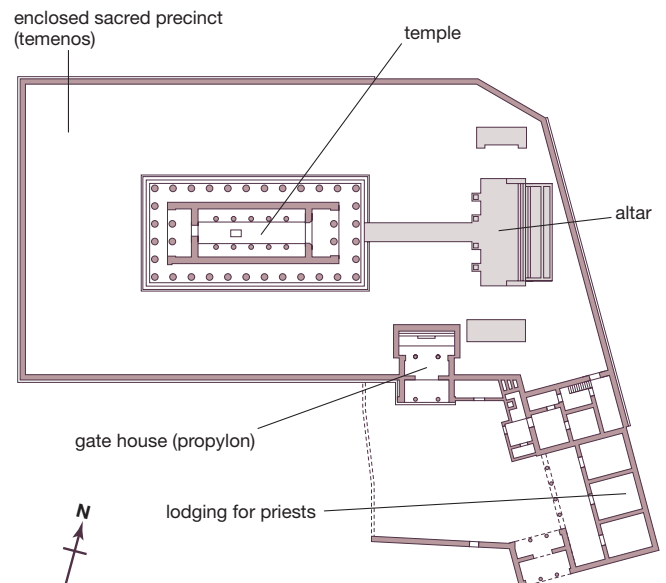
Watch an architectural simulation about the Greek orders on myartslab.com



5-11 • RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF THE TEMPLE OF APHAIA, AEGINA
c. 500 or c. 475 BCE.

Like most Greek temples, this building was neither isolated nor situated in open space, but set in relation to an outside altar where religious ceremonies were focused. By enclosing the temple within a walled precinct or temenos, the designer could control the viewer's initial experience of the temple. As the viewer entered the sacred space through a gatehouse—the propylon—the temple would be seen at an oblique angle (FIG. 5-12). Unlike ancient Egyptian temples, where long processional approaches led visitors directly to the flat entrance façade of a building (see FIGS. 3-18, 3-22), the Greek architect revealed from the outset the full shape of a closed, compact, sculptural mass, inviting viewers not to enter seeking something within, but rather to walk around the exterior, exploring the rich sculptural embellishment on pediments and frieze. Cult ceremonies, after all, took place outside the temples.

Modern viewers, however, will not find exterior sculpture at Aegina. Nothing remains from the metopes, and substantial surviving portions of the two pediments were purchased in the early nineteenth century by the future Ludwig I of Bavaria and are now exhibited in Munich. The triangular pediments in Greek temples created challenging compositional problems for sculptors intent on fitting figures into the tapering spaces at the outside corners, since the scale of figures could not change, only their poses. The west pediment from Aegina (FIG. 5-13)—traditionally dated about 500–490 BCE, before its eastern counterpart—represents a creative solution that became a design standard, appearing with variations throughout the fifth century BCE. The subject of the pediment, rendered in fully three-dimensional figures, is the participation of local warriors in the military expedition against Troy. Fallen warriors fill the angles at both ends of the pediment base, while others crouch and lunge, rising in height toward an image of Athena as warrior goddess—who can fill the elevated pointed space at the center



5-12 • PLAN OF COMPLEX OF THE TEMPLE OF APHAIA, AEGINA
c. 500 or c. 475 BCE.

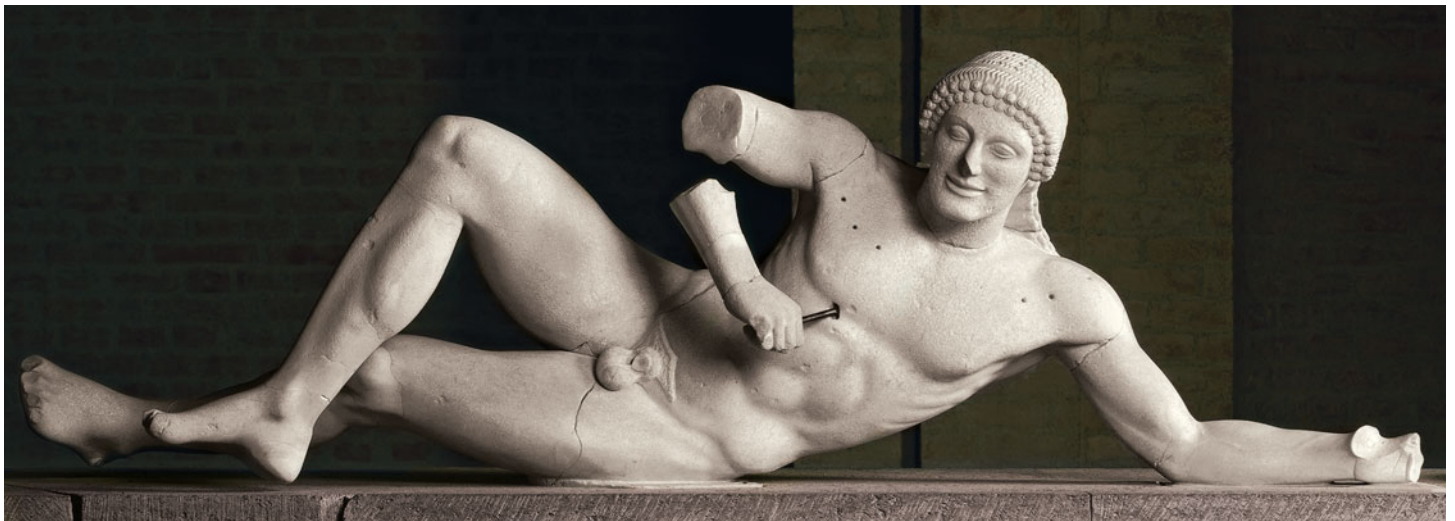
peak since she is allowed to be represented larger (hierarchical scale) than the humans who flank her.

Among the best-preserved fragments from the west pediment is the **DYING WARRIOR** from the far right corner (FIG. 5-14). This tragic but noble figure struggles to rise up, supported on bent leg and elbow, in order to extract an arrow from his chest, even though his death seems certain. This figure originally would have been painted and fitted with authentic bronze accessories, heightening the sense of reality (see “Color in Greek Sculpture,” page 113).



5-13 • WEST PEDIMENT OF THE TEMPLE OF APHAIA, AEGINA

c. 500–490 or 470s BCE. Width about 49' (15 m). Surviving fragments as assembled in the Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich (early restorations removed).



5-14 • DYING WARRIOR

From the right corner of the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. c. 500–490 or 470s BCE. Marble, length 5'6" (1.68 m). Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich.



5-15 • DYING WARRIOR

From the left corner of the east pediment of the Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. c. 490–480 or 470s BCE. Marble, length 6' (1.83 m). Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich.

TECHNIQUE | Color in Greek Sculpture

For many modern viewers, it comes as a real surprise, even a shock, that the stone sculptures of ancient Greece did not always have stark white, pure marble surfaces, comparable in appearance to—and consistent in taste with—the more recent, but still classicizing sculptures of Michelangelo or Canova (see FIGS. 21–10 and 30–14). But they were originally painted with brilliant colors. A close examination of Greek sculpture and architecture has long revealed evidence of polychromy, even to the unaided eye, but our understanding of the original appearance of these works has been greatly enhanced recently. Since the 1980s, German scholar Vinzenz Brinkmann has used extensive visual and scientific analysis to evaluate the traces of painting that remain on ancient Greek sculpture, employing tools such as ultraviolet and x-ray fluorescence, microscopy, and pigment analysis. Based on this research, he and his colleague Ulrike Koch-Brinkmann have fashioned reconstructions that allow us to imagine the exuberant effect these works would have had when they were new.



**5-16 • Vinzenz Brinkmann and Ulrike Koch-Brinkmann
RECONSTRUCTION OF ARCHER**

From the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. 2004 CE. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich.

Illustrated here is their painted reconstruction of a kneeling archer from about 500 (or during the 470s) BCE that once formed part of the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina (FIGS. 5-16, 5-17). To begin with they have replaced features of the sculpture—ringlet hair extensions, a bow, a quiver, and arrows—probably made of bronze or lead and attached to the stone after it was carved, using the holes still evident in the current state of the figure's hip and head. Most stunning, however, is the diamond-shaped patterns that were painted on his leggings and sleeves, using pigments derived from malachite, azurite, arsenic, cinnabar and charcoal. And the surfaces of such figures were not simply colored in. Artists created a sophisticated integration of three-dimensional form, color, and design. The patterning applied to this archer's leggings actually changes in size and shape in relation to the body beneath it, stretching out on expansive thighs and constricting on tapering ankles. Ancient authors indicate that sculpture was painted to make figures more lifelike, and these recent reconstructions certainly back them up.



5-17 • ARCHER ("PARIS")

From the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. c. 500–490 or 470s BCE. Marble. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich.

A similar figure appeared on the east pediment (FIG. 5-15), traditionally seen as postdating the west pediment by a decade or so. The sculptor of this dying warrior also exploited the difficult framework of the pediment corner, only here, instead of an uplifted frontal form in profile, we see a twisted body capable of turning in space. The figure is more precariously balanced on his shield, clearly about to collapse. There is an increased sense of softness in the portrayal of human flesh and a greater sophistication in tailoring bodily posture not only to the tapering shape of the pediment, but also to the expression of the warrior's own emotional

involvement in the agony and vulnerability of his predicament, which in turn inspires a sense of pathos or empathy in the viewer.

For decades, art historians have taught that over the course of a decade, two successive sets of sculptures on Aegina allow us to trace the transition from Archaic toward Early Classical art. Very recently, however, Andrew Stewart has reviewed the archaeological evidence on the Athenian Akropolis and Aegina and reached a very different conclusion. He questions the traditional dating of key works from the transition between Archaic and Early Classical art—notably the Aegina pediment sculpture and the Kritios Boy

(see FIG. 5-26)—placing them after the Persian invasion of 580–579 BCE, and raising the question of whether Greek victory over this outside enemy might have been a factor in the stylistic change. In the case of the Aegina temple, this re-dating becomes especially interesting. Instead of assuming that the difference in style between the western and eastern pediments represents a time gap separating their production, Stewart proposes that both ensembles were produced concurrently during the 470s by two workshops, one conservative and one progressive.

FREE-STANDING SCULPTURE

In addition to statues designed for temple exteriors, sculptors of the Archaic period created a new type of large, free-standing statue made of wood, **terra cotta** (clay fired over low heat, sometimes unglazed), limestone, or white marble from the islands of Paros and Naxos. These free-standing figures were brightly painted and sometimes bore inscriptions indicating that individual men or women had commissioned them for a commemorative purpose. They have been found marking graves and in sanctuaries, where they lined the sacred way from the entrance to the main temple.

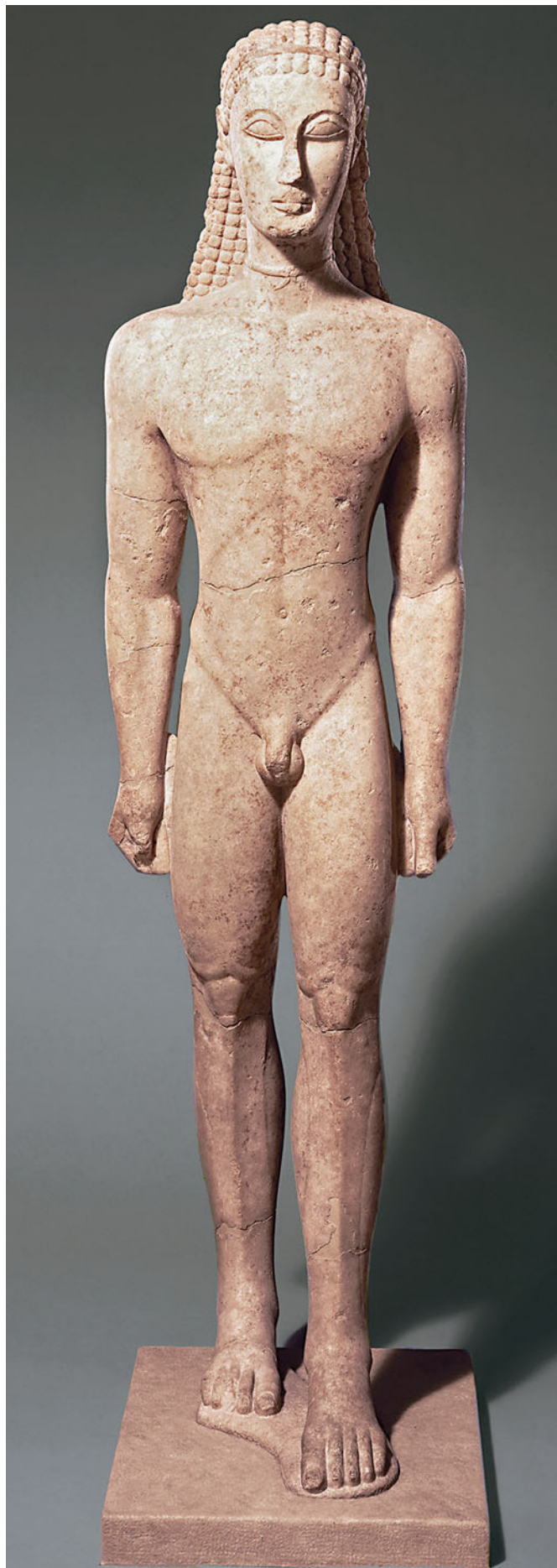
A female statue of this type is called a **kore** (plural, *korai*), Greek for “young woman,” and a male statue is called a **kouros** (plural, *kouroi*), Greek for “young man.” Archaic *korai*, always clothed, probably represented deities, priestesses, and nymphs (young female immortals who served as attendants to gods). *Kouroi*, nearly always nude, have been variously identified as gods, warriors, and victorious athletes. Because the Greeks associated young, athletic males with fertility and family continuity, the *kouroi* figures may have symbolized ancestors.

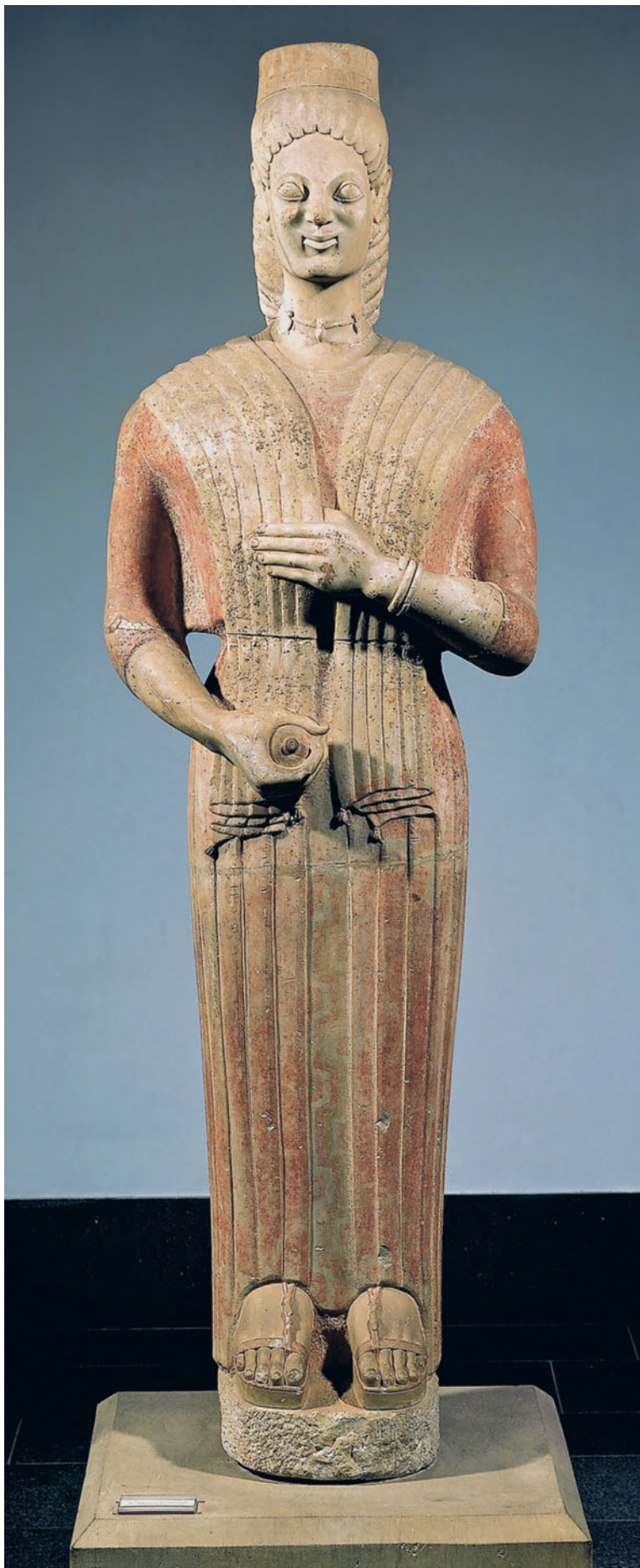
METROPOLITAN KOUROS A *kouros* dated about 600 BCE (FIG. 5-18) recalls the pose and proportions of Egyptian sculpture. As with Egyptian figures such as the statue of Menkaure (see FIG. 3-9), this young Greek stands rigidly upright, arms at his sides, fists clenched, and one leg slightly in front of the other. However, the Greek artist has cut away all stone from around the body to make the human form free-standing. Archaic *kouroi* are also much less lifelike than their Egyptian forebears. Anatomy is delineated with linear ridges and grooves that form regular, symmetrical patterns. The head is ovoid and schematized, and the wiglike hair evenly knotted into tufts and tied back with a narrow ribbon. The eyes are relatively large and wide open, and the mouth forms a conventional closed-lip expression known as the **Archaic smile**. In Egyptian sculpture, male figures usually wore clothing associated with their status, such as the headdresses, necklaces, and kilts that identified them as kings. The total nudity of the Greek *kouroi* is unusual in ancient Mediterranean cultures, but it is acceptable—even valued—in the case of young men. Not so with women.

5-18 • METROPOLITAN KOUROS

Attica, Greece. c. 600–590 BCE. Marble, height 6'4 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (1.95 m).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Fletcher Fund, 1932. (32.11.1)





BERLIN KORE Early Archaic *korai* are as severe and stylized as the male figures. The **BERLIN KORE**, a funerary statue found in a cemetery at Keratea and dated about 570–560 BCE, stands more than 6 feet tall (FIG. 5-19). The erect, full-bodied figure takes an immobile pose—accentuated by a bulky crown and thick-soled clogs. The thick robe and tasseled cloak over her shoulders fall in regularly spaced, symmetrically disposed, parallel folds like the fluting on a Greek column. This drapery masks her body but mimics its curving contours. Traces of red—perhaps the red clay used to make thin sheets of gold adhere—indicate that the robe was once painted or gilded. The figure holds a pomegranate in her right hand, a symbol of Persephone, who was abducted by Hades, the god of the underworld, and whose annual return brought the springtime.

ANAVYSOS KOUROS The powerful, rounded, athletic body of a *kouros* from Anavysos, dated about 530 BCE, documents the increasing interest of artists and their patrons in a more lifelike rendering of the human figure (FIG. 5-20). The pose, wiglike hair, and Archaic smile echo the earlier style, but the massive torso and limbs have carefully rendered, bulging musculature, suggesting heroic strength. The statue, a grave monument to a fallen war hero, has been associated with a base inscribed: “Stop and grieve at the tomb of the dead Kroisos, slain by wild Ares [god of war] in the front rank of battle.” However, there is no evidence that the figure was meant to preserve the likeness of Kroisos or anyone else. He is a symbolic type, not a specific individual.

“PEPLOS” KORE The kore in FIGURE 5-21 is dated about the same time as the Anavysos Kouros, though she is a votive rather than a funerary statue. Like the *kouros*, she has rounded body forms, but unlike him, she is clothed. She has the same motionless, vertical pose of the Berlin Kore (see FIG. 5-19), but her bare arms and head convey a sense of soft flesh covering a real bone structure, and her smile and hair are considerably less stylized. The original painted colors on both body and clothing must have made her seem even more lifelike, and she also once wore a metal crown and jewelry.

The name we use for this figure is based on an assessment of her clothing as a young girl’s peplos—a draped rectangle of cloth pinned at the shoulders and belted to give a bloused effect—but it has recently been argued that this *kore* is actually not wearing a peplos but a sheathlike garment,

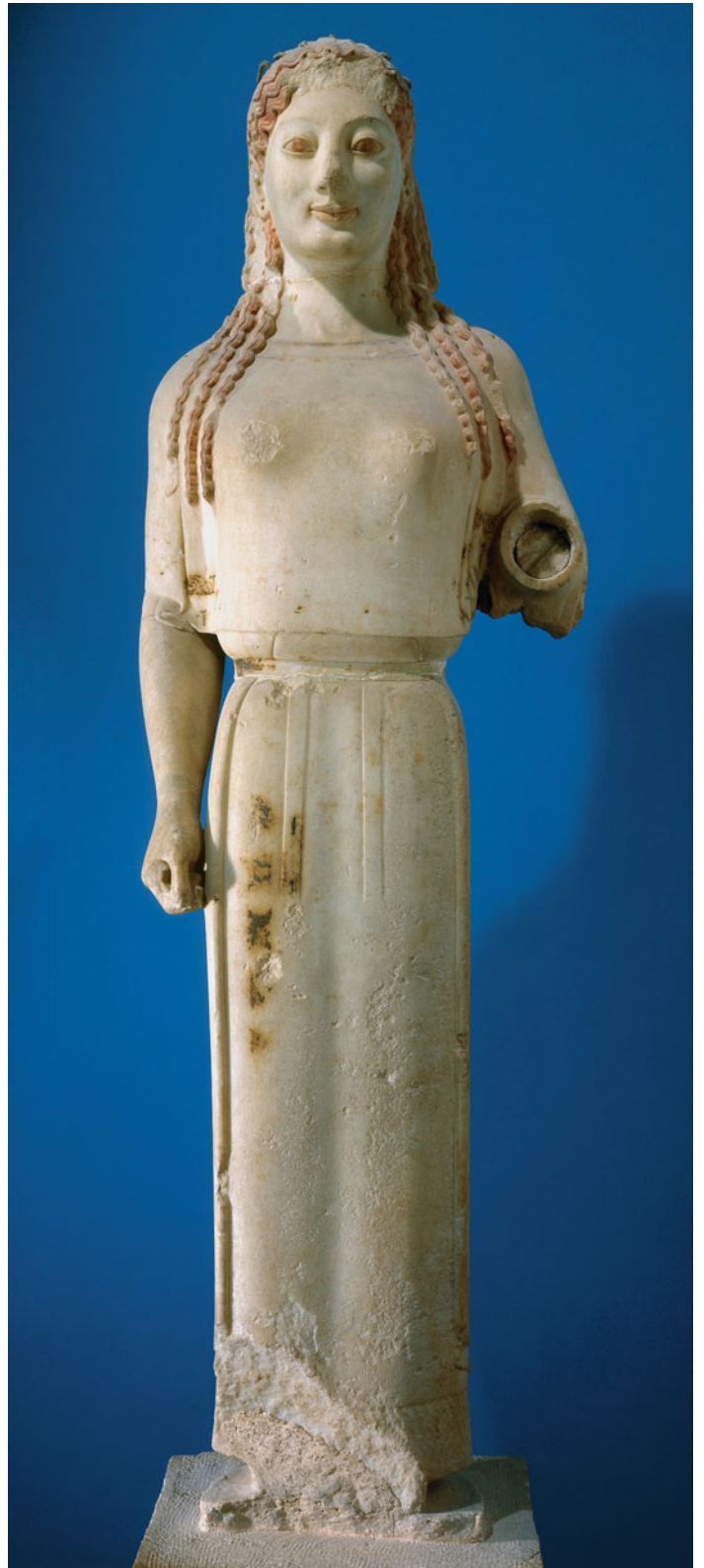
5-19 • BERLIN KORE

From the cemetery at Keratea, near Athens. c. 570–560 BCE.
Marble with remnants of red paint, height 6’3” (1.9 m). Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.



5-20 • ANAVYSOS KOUROS

From the cemetery at Anavysos, near Athens. c. 530 BCE. Marble with remnants of paint, height 6'4" (1.93 m). National Archaeological Museum, Athens.



5-21 • "PEPLOS" KORE

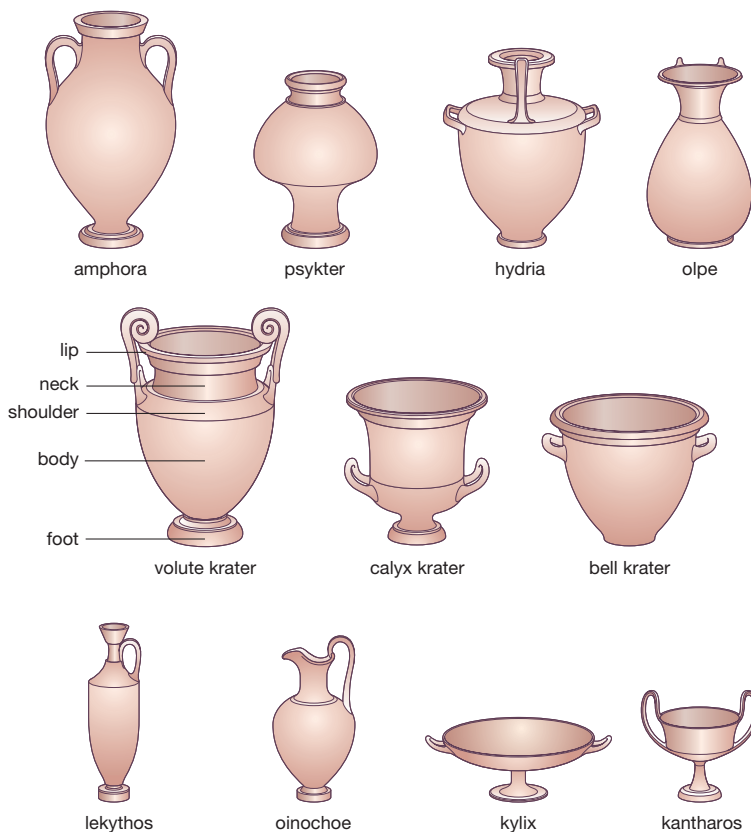
From the Akropolis, Athens. c. 530 BCE. Marble, height 4' (1.21 m). Akropolis Museum, Athens.

originally painted with a frieze of animals, identifying her not as a young girl but a goddess, perhaps Athena or Artemis. Her missing left forearm—which was made of a separate piece of marble fitted into the still-visible socket—would have extended forward horizontally, and may have held an attribute that provided the key to her identity.

PAINTED POTS

Greek potters created beautiful vessels whose standardized shapes were tailored to specific utilitarian functions (**FIG. 5-22**). Occasionally, these potters actually signed their work, as did the artists who painted scenes on the pots. Greek ceramic painters became highly accomplished at accommodating their pictures to the often awkward fields on utilitarian shapes, and they usually showcased not isolated figures but scenes of human interaction evoking a story.

BLACK-FIGURE VESSELS During the Archaic period, Athens became the dominant center for pottery manufacture and trade in Greece, and Athenian painters adopted Corinthian black-figure techniques (see **FIG. 5-4**), which became the principal mode of decoration throughout Greece in the sixth century BCE. At first, Athenian vase painters retained the horizontal banded composition that was characteristic of the Geometric period. Over time, however, they decreased the number of bands and increased the size of figures until a single narrative scene dominates each side of the vessel.



5-22 • SOME STANDARD SHAPES OF GREEK VESSELS



5-23 • Amasis Painter DIONYSOS WITH MAENADS
c. 540 BCE. Black-figure decoration on an amphora. Ceramic, height of amphora 13" (33.3 cm). Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

THE AMASIS PAINTER A mid-sixth-century BCE amphora—a large, all-purpose storage jar—with bands of decoration above and below a central figural composition illustrates this development (**FIG. 5-23**). The painting on this amphora has been attributed to an artist we call the Amasis Painter, since this distinctive style was first recognized on vessels signed by a prolific potter named Amasis.

Two maenads (female worshippers of the wine god Dionysos), intertwined with arms around each other's shoulders, skip forward to present their offerings—a long-eared rabbit and a small deer—to the god. (Amasis signed his work just above the rabbit.) The maenad holding the deer wears the skin of a spotted panther (or leopard), its head still attached, draped over her shoulders and secured with a belt at her waist. The god, an imposing, richly dressed figure, clasps a large **kantharos** (wine cup). This encounter between humans and a god appears to be a joyful, celebratory occasion rather than one of reverence or fear. The Amasis Painter favored strong shapes and patterns over conventions for making figures appear to occupy real space. He emphasized fine details, such as the large, delicate petal and spiral designs below

TECHNIQUE | Black-Figure and Red-Figure

The two predominant techniques for painting on Greek ceramic vessels were black-figure (**FIG. 5-24**) and red-figure (**FIG. 5-25**). Both involved applying **slip** (a mixture of clay and water) to the surface of a pot and carefully manipulating the firing process in a kiln (a closed oven) to control the amount of oxygen reaching the ceramics. This firing process involved three stages. In the first stage, oxygen was allowed into the kiln, which “fixed” the whole vessel in one overall shade of red depending on the composition of the clay. Then, in the second (reduction) stage, the oxygen in the kiln was cut back (reduced) to a minimum, turning the vessel black, and the temperature was raised to the point at which the slip partially vitrified (became glasslike). Finally, in the third stage, oxygen was allowed back into the kiln, turning the unslipped areas back to a shade of red. The areas where slip had been applied, however, were sealed against the oxygen and remained black.

In the black-figure technique, artists silhouetted the forms—figures, objects, or abstract motifs—with slip against the unpainted clay of the background. Then, using a sharp tool (a stylus), they cut through the slip to the body of the vessel, **incising** linear details within the silhouetted

shape by revealing the unpainted clay underneath. The characteristic color contrast only appeared in firing. Sometimes touches of white and reddish-purple gloss—made of metallic pigments mixed with slip—enhanced the decorative effect.

In the red-figure technique, the approach was reversed. Artists painted not the shapes of the forms themselves but the background around forms (negative space), reserving unpainted areas for silhouetted forms. Instead of engraving details, painters drew on the reserved areas with a fine brush dipped in liquid slip. The result was a lustrous black vessel with light-colored figures delineated in fluid black lines.

The contrasting effects obtained by these two techniques are illustrated here in details of two sides of a single amphora of about 525 BCE, both portraying the same figural composition, one painted by an artist using black-figure, and the other painted by an innovative proponent of red-figure technique. The sharp precision and flattened decorative richness characterizing black-figure contrasts strikingly here with the increased fluidity and greater sense of three-dimensionality facilitated by the development of the red-figure technique.



5-24 • Lysippides Painter HERAKLES DRIVING A BULL TO SACRIFICE

c. 525–520 BCE. Black-figure decoration on an amphora. Ceramic, height of amphora $20\frac{15}{16}$ " (53.2 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Henry Lillie Pierce Fund (99.538)



5-25 • Andokides Painter HERAKLES DRIVING A BULL TO SACRIFICE

c. 525–520 BCE. Red-figure decoration on an amphora. Ceramic, height of amphora $20\frac{15}{16}$ " (53.2 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Henry Lillie Pierce Fund (99.538)

each handle, the figures' meticulously arranged hair, and the bold patterns on their clothing.

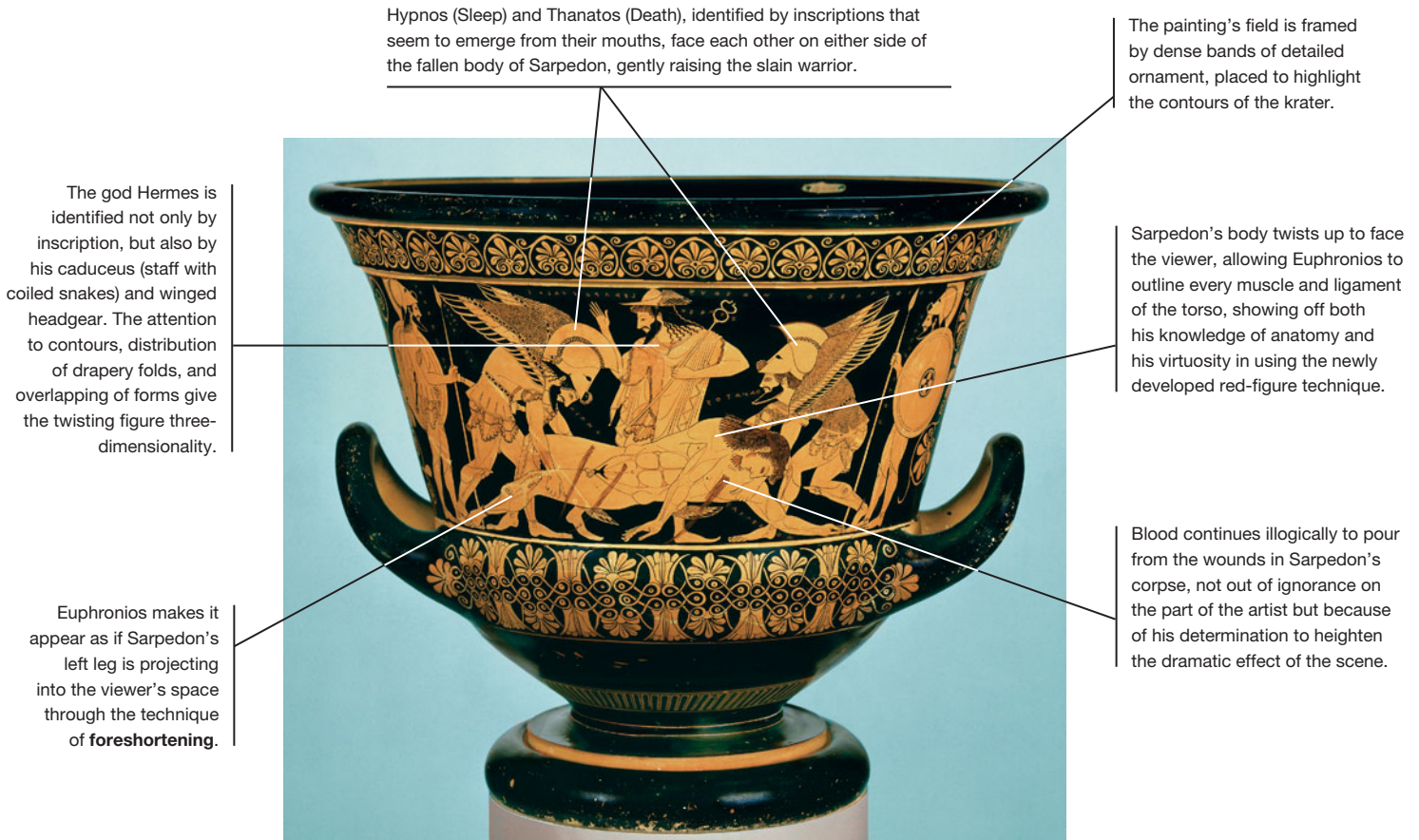
EXEKIAS Perhaps the most famous of all Athenian black-figure painters, Exekias, signed many of his vessels as both potter and painter. He took his subjects from Greek mythology, which he and his patrons probably considered to be history. On the body of

an amphora we have already seen at the beginning of this chapter, he portrayed Trojan War heroes Ajax and Achilles in a rare moment of relaxation playing dice (see **FIG. 5-1**). This is an episode not included in any literary source, but for Greeks familiar with the story, this anecdotal portrayal of friendly play would have been a poignant reminder that before the end of the war, the heroes would be parted by death, Achilles in battle and Ajax by suicide.

A CLOSER LOOK | The Death of Sarpedon

by Euphronios (painter) and Euxitheos (potter).

c. 515 BCE. Red-figure decoration on a calyx krater. Ceramic, height of krater 18" (45.7 cm).
Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia, Rome.



 **View** the Closer Look for the krater showing the death of Sarpedon on myartslab.com

Knowing the story was critical to engaging with such paintings, and artists often included identifying labels beside the characters to guide viewers to the narrative source so they could delight in the painters' rich renderings of familiar narrative situations.

RED-FIGURE VESSELS In the last third of the sixth century BCE, while many painters were still creating handsome black-figure wares, some turned away from this meticulous process to a new, more fluid technique called **red-figure** (see "Black-Figure and Red-Figure," opposite). In this mode of decoration, red figures stand out against a black background, the opposite of black-figure painting. The greater freedom and flexibility that resulted from painting rather than engraving details led ceramic painters to adopt the red-figure technique widely in a relatively short time. It allowed them to create livelier human figures with a more developed sense of bodily form—qualities that were increasingly demanded of Greek artists in several media.

EUPHRONIOS One of the best-known red-figure artists was Euphronios. His rendering of the death of Sarpedon, about 515 BCE (see "A Closer Look," above), is painted on a krater—called a **calyx krater** because its handles curve up like a flower's calyx. Such a vessel was used as a punchbowl during a **symposium**, a social gathering of rich and powerful men. According to Homer's *Iliad*, Sarpedon, a son of Zeus and a mortal woman, was killed by the Greek warrior Patroclus while fighting for the Trojans. Euphronios captures the scene in which the warrior is being carried off to the underworld, the land of the dead.

Euphronios has created a balanced composition of verticals and horizontals that take the shape of the vessel into account. The bands of decoration above and below the scene echo the long horizontal of the dead fighter's body, which seems to levitate in the gentle grasp of its bearers, and the inward-curving lines of the handles mirror the arching backs and extended wings of Hypnos (Sleep) and Thanatos (Death). The upright figures of the

Our words “classic” and “classical” come from the Latin word *classis*, referring to the division of people into classes based on wealth. “Classic” has come to mean “first class” or “the standard of excellence.” Greek artists in the fifth century BCE sought to create ideal images based on strict mathematical proportions, which we call “Classical.” Since Roman artists were inspired by the Greeks, “Classical” often refers to the

cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. By extension, the word may also mean “in the style of ancient Greece and Rome,” whenever or wherever that style is used. In the most general usage, a “classic” is something—perhaps a literary work, an automobile, a film, even a soft drink—thought to be of lasting quality and universal esteem.

lance-bearers on each side and Hermes in the center counterbalance the horizontal and diagonal elements of the composition. While conveying a sense of the mass and energy of human subjects, Euphronios also portrayed the elaborate details of their clothing, musculature, and facial features with the fine tip of a brush. And he created the impression of real space around the figures by gently foreshortening Sarpedon’s left leg that appears to be coming toward the viewer’s own space. Such formal features, as well as a palpable sense of pathos in the face of Sarpedon’s fate, seem to connect Euphronios’ work with the dying warriors of the pediments from Aegina (see FIGS. 5–14, 5–15).

THE EARLY CLASSICAL PERIOD, c. 480–450 BCE

Over the brief span of 160 years, between c. 480 and 323 BCE, the Greeks established an ideal of beauty that has endured in the Western world to this day. Scholars have associated Greek Classical art with three general concepts: humanism, rationalism, and idealism (see “Classic and Classical,” above). The ancient Greeks believed the words of their philosophers and followed these injunctions in their art: “Man is the measure of all things,” that is, seek an ideal based on the human form; “Know thyself,” seek the inner significance of forms; and “Nothing in excess,” reproduce only essential forms. In their embrace of humanism, the Greeks even imagined their gods as perfect human beings. But the Greeks valued human reason over human emotion. They saw all aspects of life, including the arts, as having meaning and pattern. Nothing happens by accident. It is not surprising that great Greek artists and architects were not only practitioners but theoreticians as well. In the fifth century BCE, the sculptor Polykleitos (see “‘The Canon’ of Polykleitos,” page 134) and the architect Iktinos both wrote books on the theory underlying their practice.

Art historians usually divide the Classical into three phases, based on the formal qualities of the art: the Early Classical period (c. 480–450 BCE); the High Classical period (c. 450–400 BCE); and the Late Classical period (c. 400–323 BCE). The Early Classical period begins with the defeat of the Persians in 480–479 BCE by an alliance of city-states led by Athens and Sparta. The expanding Persian Empire had posed a formidable threat to the independence

of the city-states, and the two sides had been locked in battle for decades until the Greek alliance was able to repulse a Persian invasion and score a decisive victory. Some scholars have argued that their success against the Persians gave the Greeks a self-confidence that accelerated artistic development, inspiring artists to seek new and more effective ways to express their cities’ accomplishments. In any case, the period that followed the Persian Wars, extending to about 450 BCE, saw the emergence of a new stylistic direction, away from elegant stylizations and toward a sense of greater faithfulness to the natural appearance of human beings and their world.

MARBLE SCULPTURE

In the remarkably short time of only a few generations, Greek sculptors had moved far from the stiff bearing and rigid frontality of the Archaic *kouroi* to more relaxed poses in lifelike figures such as the so-called **KRITIOS BOY** of about 480 BCE (FIG. 5–26). The softly rounded body forms, broad facial features, and calm expression give the figure an air of self-confident seriousness. His weight rests on his left, engaged leg, while his right, relaxed leg bends slightly at the knee, and a noticeable curve in his spine counters the slight shifting of his hips and a subtle drop of one of his shoulders. We see here the beginnings of **contrapposto**, the convention (later developed in full by High Classical sculptors such as Polykleitos) of presenting standing figures with opposing alternations of tension and relaxation around a central axis that will dominate Classical art. The slight turn of the head invites the spectator to follow his gaze and move around the figure, admiring the small marble statue from every angle.

BRONZE SCULPTURE

The development of the technique of hollow-casting bronze in the lost-wax process gave Greek sculptors the potential to create more complex action poses with outstretched arms and legs. These were very difficult to create in marble, since unbalanced figures might topple over and extended appendages might break off due to their pendulous weight. Bronze figures were easier to balance, and the metal’s greater tensile strength made complicated poses and gestures technically possible.

The painted underside of an Athenian **kylix** (broad, flat drinking cup) portrays work in a late Archaic foundry for casting life-size



5-26 • KRITIOS BOY

From the Akropolis, Athens. c. 475 BCE. Marble, height 3'10" (1.17 m). Akropolis Museum, Athens.

The damaged figure, excavated from the debris on the Athenian Akropolis, was thought by its finders to be by the Greek sculptor Kritios, whose work they knew only from Roman copies.

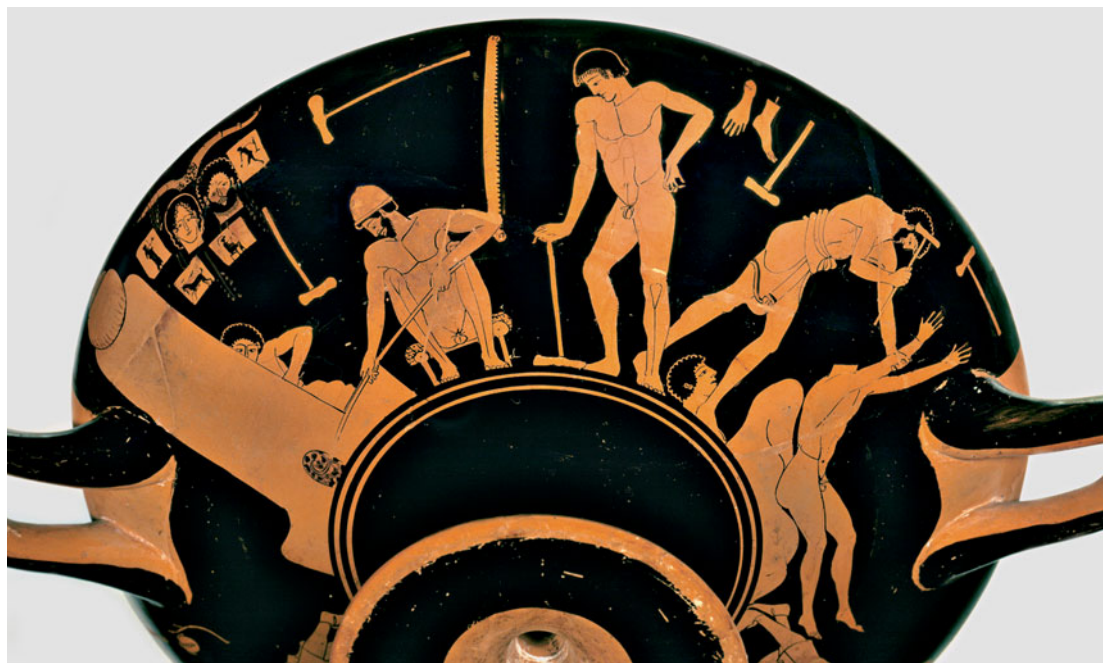
figures (FIG. 5-27), providing clear evidence that the Greeks were creating large bronze statues in active poses as early as the first decades of the fifth century BCE. The walls of the workshop are filled with hanging tools and other foundry paraphernalia including several sketches—a horse, human heads, and human figures in different poses. One worker, wearing what looks like a modern-day construction helmet, squats to tend the furnace on the left, perhaps aided by an assistant who peeks from behind. The man in the center, possibly the supervisor, leans on a staff, while a third worker assembles a leaping figure that is braced against a molded support. The unattached head lies between his feet.

5-27 • Foundry Painter

A BRONZE FOUNDRY

490–480 BCE. Red-figure decoration on a kylix from Vulci, Italy. Ceramic, diameter of kylix 12" (31 cm). Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Antikensammlung.

The Foundry Painter has masterfully organized this workshop scene within the flaring space that extends upward from the foot of the vessel and along its curving underside to the lip, thereby using a circle as the ground-line for his composition.



THE CHARIOTEER A spectacular and rare life-size bronze, the **CHARIOTEER** (FIG. 5-28), cast about 470 BCE, documents the skills of Early Classical bronze-casters. It was found in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, together with fragments of a bronze chariot and horses, all buried during an earthquake in 373 BCE that may have saved them from the fate of most ancient bronzes, which were melted down so the material could be recycled and made into a new work. According to its inscription, the sculptural group commemorated a victory in the Pythian Games of 478 or 474 BCE, though it was the team of horses and the owner—not the charioteer—who were being celebrated.

The face of this handsome youth is highly idealized, but there is a lifelike quality to the way his head turns slightly to one side, and the glittering, onyx eyes and fine copper eye-lashes enhance his intense, focused expression. He stands at attention, sheathed in a long robe with folds falling naturally under their own weight, varying in width and depth, yet seemingly capable of swaying and rippling with the charioteer's movement. The feet, with their closely observed toes, toenails, and swelling veins over the instep, are so realistic that they seem to have been cast from molds made from the feet of a living person.

THE RIACE WARRIORS Shipwreck as well as earthquake has protected ancient bronzes from recycling. As recently as 1972, divers recovered a pair of heavily corroded, larger-than-life-size bronze figures of warriors from the seabed off the coast of Riace, Italy, dating from about 460–450 BCE (see “The Riace Warriors,” page 127).

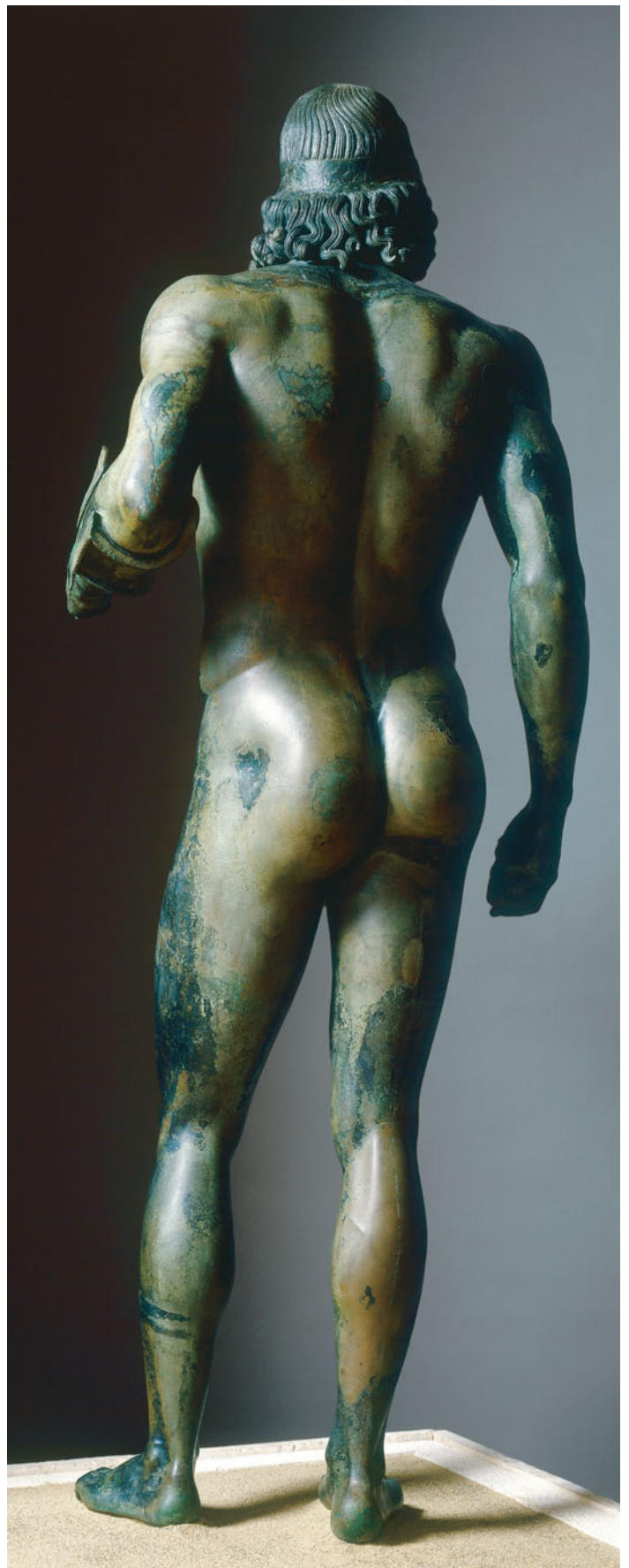
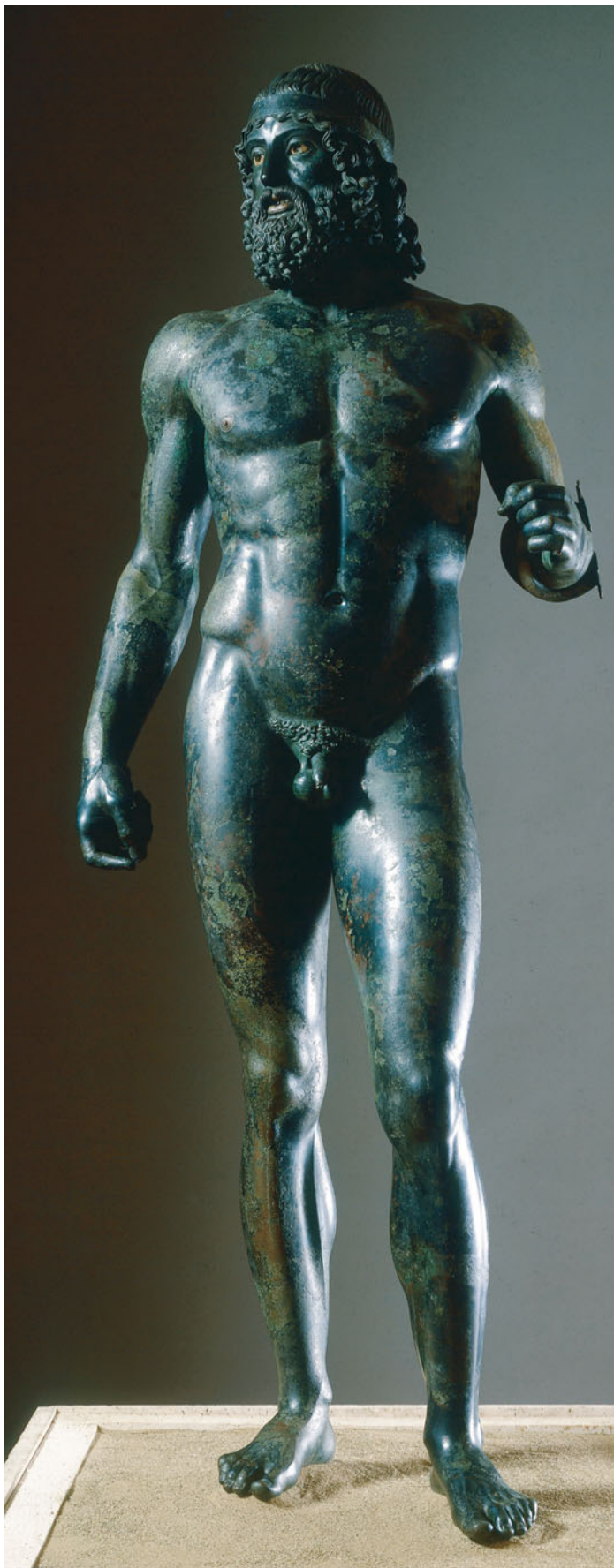
The **WARRIOR** in FIG. 5-29 reveals a striking balance between the idealized smoothness of “perfected” anatomy conforming to Early Classical standards and the reproduction of details observed from nature, such as the swelling veins in the backs of the hands. Contrapposto is further developed here than in the Kritios Boy, with a more pronounced counterbalance between tension (right leg and left arm) and relaxation (left leg and right arm), raising the prospect of a shift and

5-28 • CHARIOTEER

From the Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi. c. 470 BCE. Bronze, copper (lips and lashes), silver (hand), onyx (eyes), height 5'11" (1.8 m). Archaeological Museum, Delphi.

The setting of a work of art affects the impression it makes. Today, the *Charioteer* is exhibited on a low base in the peaceful surroundings of a museum, isolated from other works and spotlighted for close examination. Its effect would have been very different in its original outdoor location, standing in a horse-drawn chariot atop a tall monument. Viewers in ancient times, tired from the steep climb to the sanctuary and jostled by crowds of fellow pilgrims, could have absorbed only its overall effect, not the fine details of the face, robe, and body visible to today's viewers.





5-29 • WARRIOR

Found in the sea off Riace, Italy. c. 460–450 BCE. Bronze with bone and glass eyes, silver teeth, and copper lips and nipples, height 6'9" (2.05 m). National Archeological Museum, Reggio Calabria, Italy.

A BROADER LOOK | The Tomb of the Diver

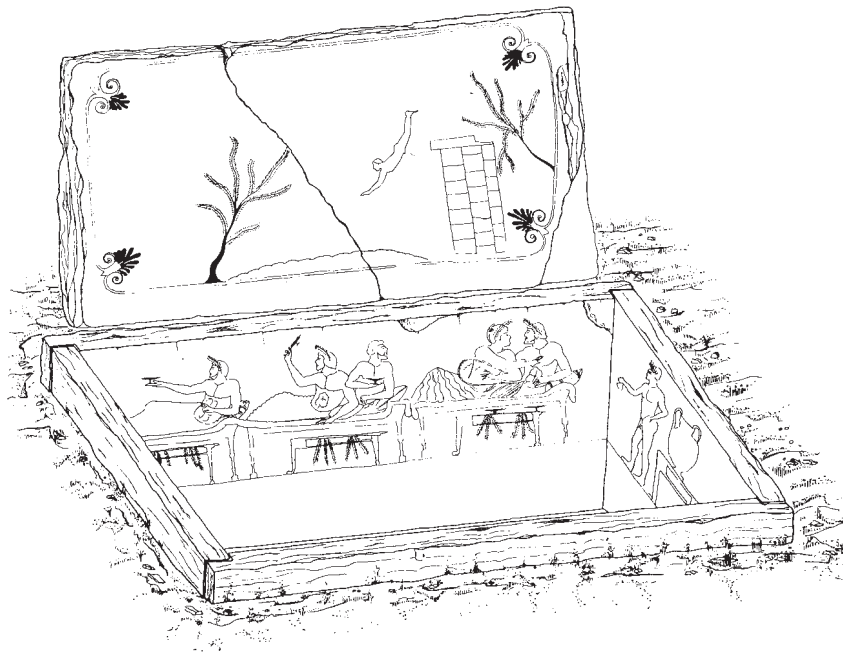
Although ancient Greek commentators describe elaborate monumental wall paintings and discuss the output and careers of illustrious painters from the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, almost nothing of this art has survived. We rely heavily on ceramics to fill gaps in our knowledge of Greek painting, assuming that the decoration of these more modest utilitarian vessels reflects the glorious painting tradition documented in texts. There are also tantalizing survivals in provincial Greek sites. Principal among them are the well-preserved Early Classical wall paintings of c. 480–470 BCE in the Tomb of the Diver, discovered in 1968 just south of the Greek colony of Poseidonia (Roman Paestum) in southern Italy.

The paintings cover travertine slabs that formed the four walls and roof of a tomb submerged into the natural rock (FIG. 5-30), approximately 7 feet long, 3½ feet wide, and 2½ feet deep. Painted in buon fresco (water-based pigments applied to wet plaster) on a white ground in earthy browns, yellows, and blacks, with accents of blue, the scenes on the walls surrounded the occupant of this tomb with a group of reclining men, assembled for a symposium—lively, elite male gatherings that focused on wine, music, games, and love making. Many of the most

distinguished of surviving Greek ceramic vessels were made for use in these playfully competitive drinking parties, and they are highlighted in the tomb paintings. On one short side (visible in the reconstruction drawing), a striding nude youth has filled the oinochoe (wine jug) in his right hand with the mixture of wine and water that was served from large kraters (punch bowls, like that portrayed on the table behind him) as the featured beverage of the symposium. He extends his arm toward a group of revelers reclining along one of the long walls (FIG. 5-31), each of whom has a kylix (wide, shallow, footed drinking cup), waiting to be filled. The man at the left reclines alone, raising his kylix to salute a couple just arriving—or perhaps toasting their departure—on the other short side. Behind him, the two couples on the long frieze—in each case a bearded, mature man paired with a youthful companion—are already engaged in the party. The young man in the middle pairing is slinging his upraised kylix, presumably to propel the dregs of his wine toward a target, a popular symposium game. His partner turns in the opposite direction to ogle at the amorous pair at the right, who have abandoned their cups on the table in front of them and turned to embrace, gazing into each other's eyes as the erotic action heats up.

The significance of these paintings in relationship to a young man's tomb is not absolutely clear. Perhaps they are indicative of the deceased's elevated social status, since only wealthy aristocrats participated in such gatherings. The symposium could also represent funerary feasting or a vision of the pleasures that awaits the deceased in a world beyond death.

The transition between this world and the next certainly seems to be the theme of the spare but energetic painting on the roof of the tomb, where a naked boy is caught in mid dive, poised to plunge into the water portrayed as a blue mound underneath him (FIG. 5-32). Whereas the scene of the symposium accords with an ancient Greek pictorial tradition, especially prominent on ceramic vessels made for use by its male participants, this diver finds his closest parallels in Etruscan tomb painting (see FIG. 6-6), flourishing at this time farther north in Italy. Since the scene was located directly over the body of the man entombed here, it is likely that it mirrors his own plunge from life into death. And since it combines Greek and Etruscan traditions, perhaps this tomb was made for an Etruscan citizen of Poseidonia, whose tomb was commissioned from a Greek artist working in this flourishing provincial center.



5-30 • RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF THE TOMB OF THE DIVER, POSEIDONIA (ROMAN PAESTUM)

c. 480 BCE.



5-31 • A SYMPOSIUM SCENE

From the Tomb of the Diver, Poseidonia (Roman Paestum). c. 480 BCE. Fresco on travertine slab, height 31" (78 cm). Paestum Museum.



5-32 • A DIVER

From the Tomb of the Diver, Poseidonia (Roman Paestum). c. 480 BCE. Fresco on travertine slab, height 3'4" (1.02 m). Paestum Museum.

with it the possibility of movement and life. The lifelike quality of this bronze is further heightened by inserted eyeballs of bone and colored glass, copper inlays on lips and nipples, silver plating on the teeth that peek between parted lips, and attached eyelashes and eyebrows of separately cast strands of bronze. This accommodation of the intense study of the human figure to an idealism that belies the irregularity of nature will be continued by artists in the High Classical period.

CERAMIC PAINTING

Greek potters and painters continued to work with the red-figure technique throughout the fifth century BCE, refining their ability to create supple, rounded figures, posed in ever more complicated and dynamic compositions. One of the most prolific Early Classical artists was Douris, whose signature appears on over 40 surviving pots decorated with scenes from everyday life as well as mythological subjects. His conspicuous skill in composing complex figural scenes that respond to the complicated and irregular pictorial fields of a variety of vessel types is evident in a frieze of frisky satyrs that he painted c. 480 BCE around the perimeter of a **psykter** (FIG. 5-33). This strangely shaped pot was a wine cooler, made to float in a krater (see “A Closer Look,” page 119) filled with chilled water, its extended bottom serving as a keel to keep it from tipping over.

Like the krater, the psykter was a vessel meant for use in exclusive male drinking parties known as symposia, and the decoration was chosen with this context in mind. The acrobatic virtuosity of the satyrs is matched by the artist’s own virtuosity in composing them as an interlocking set of diagonal gestures that alternately challenge and correspond with the bulging form around which they are painted. The playful interaction of satyrs with their kylixes must have amused the tipsy revelers, especially when this pot was gently bobbing within the krater, making the satyrs seem to be walking around in circles on top of the wine. One satyr cups his kylix to his buttocks, juxtaposing convex and concave shapes. Another, balanced in a precarious handstand, seems to be observing his own reflection within the wine of his kylix.

But Douris was also capable of more lyrical compositions, as seen in the painting he placed within a kylix (FIG. 5-34), similar in shape to those used as props by the satyrs on the psykter. This **tondo** (circular painting) was an intimate picture. It became visible only to the user of the cup when he tilted up the kylix to drink from it; otherwise, sitting on a table, the painting would have been obscured by the dark wine pool within it. A languidly posed and elegantly draped youth stands behind an altar pouring wine from an **oinochoe** (wine jug) into the kylix of a more dignified, bearded older man. Euphronios’ tentative essay in foreshortening Sarpedon’s bent leg on his krater (see “A Closer Look,” page 119) blossoms in the work of Douris to become full-scale formal projection as the graceful youth on this kylix bends his arm from the background to project his frontal oinochoe over the laterally held kylix of his seated companion.



5-33 • Douris FROLICKING SATYRS

c. 480 BCE. Red-figure decoration on a psykter. Ceramic, height 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (28.7 cm). British Museum, London.

RECOVERING THE PAST | The Riace Warriors

In 1972, a scuba diver in the Ionian Sea near the beach resort of Riace, Italy, found what appeared to be a human elbow and upper arm protruding from sand about 25 feet beneath the sea. Taking a closer look, he discovered that the arm was made of metal, not flesh, and was part of a large statue. He quickly uncovered a second statue nearby, and underwater salvagers soon raised the statues: bronze warriors more than 6 feet tall, complete in every respect, except for swords, shields, and one helmet.

After centuries underwater, however, the bronze *Warriors* were corroded and covered with accretions. The clay cores from the casting

process were still inside, adding to the deterioration by absorbing lime and sea salts. Conservators first removed all the exterior corrosion and lime encrustations using surgeon's scalpels, pneumatic drills, and high-technology equipment such as sonar (sound-wave) probes and micro-sanders. Then they painstakingly removed the clay core through existing holes in the heads and feet using hooks, scoops, jets of distilled water, and concentrated solutions of peroxide. Finally, they cleaned the figures thoroughly by soaking them in solvents, and they sealed them with a fixative specially designed for use on metals before exhibiting them in 1980.



5-34 • Douris A YOUTH POURING WINE INTO THE KYLIX OF A COMPANION

c. 480 BCE. Red-figure decoration on a kylix. Ceramic, height 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (32.4 cm). The Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei.

For the well-educated reveler using this cup at a symposium, there were several possible readings for the scene he was observing. This could be the legendary Athenian king Kekrops, who appears, identified by inscription, in the scene Douris painted on the underside of the kylix. Also on the bottom of the cup are Zeus and the young Trojan prince Ganymede, whom the supreme god abducted to Olympus to serve as his cup-bearer. Or, since the symposia themselves were the site of amorous interactions between older and younger men, the user of this cup might have found his own situation mirrored in what he was observing while he drank.

THE HIGH CLASSICAL PERIOD, c. 450–400 BCE

The High Classical period of Greek art lasted only a half-century, 450–400 BCE. The use of the word “high” to qualify the art of this time reflects the value judgments of art historians who have considered this period a pinnacle of artistic refinement, producing works that set a standard of unsurpassed excellence. Some have even referred to this half-century as Greece’s “Golden Age,” although these decades were also marked by turmoil and destruction. Without a common enemy, Sparta and Athens turned on each other in a series of conflicts known as the Peloponnesian War. Sparta dominated the Peloponnese peninsula and much of the rest of

mainland Greece, while Athens controlled the Aegean and became the wealthy and influential center of a maritime empire. Today we remember Athens more for its cultural and intellectual brilliance and its experiments with democratic government, which reached its zenith in the fifth century BCE under the charismatic leader Perikles (c. 495–429 BCE), than for the imperialistic tendencies of its considerable commercial power.

Except for a few brief interludes, Perikles dominated Athenian politics and culture from 462 BCE until his death in 429 BCE. Although comedy writers of the time sometimes mocked him, calling him “Zeus” and “The Olympian” because of his haughty personality, he was a dynamic, charismatic political and military leader. He was also a great patron of the arts, supporting the use of Athenian wealth for the adornment of the city, and encouraging artists to promote a public image of peace, prosperity, and power. Perikles said of his city and its accomplishments: “Future generations will marvel at us, as the present age marvels at us now.” It was a prophecy he himself helped fulfill.

THE AKROPOLIS

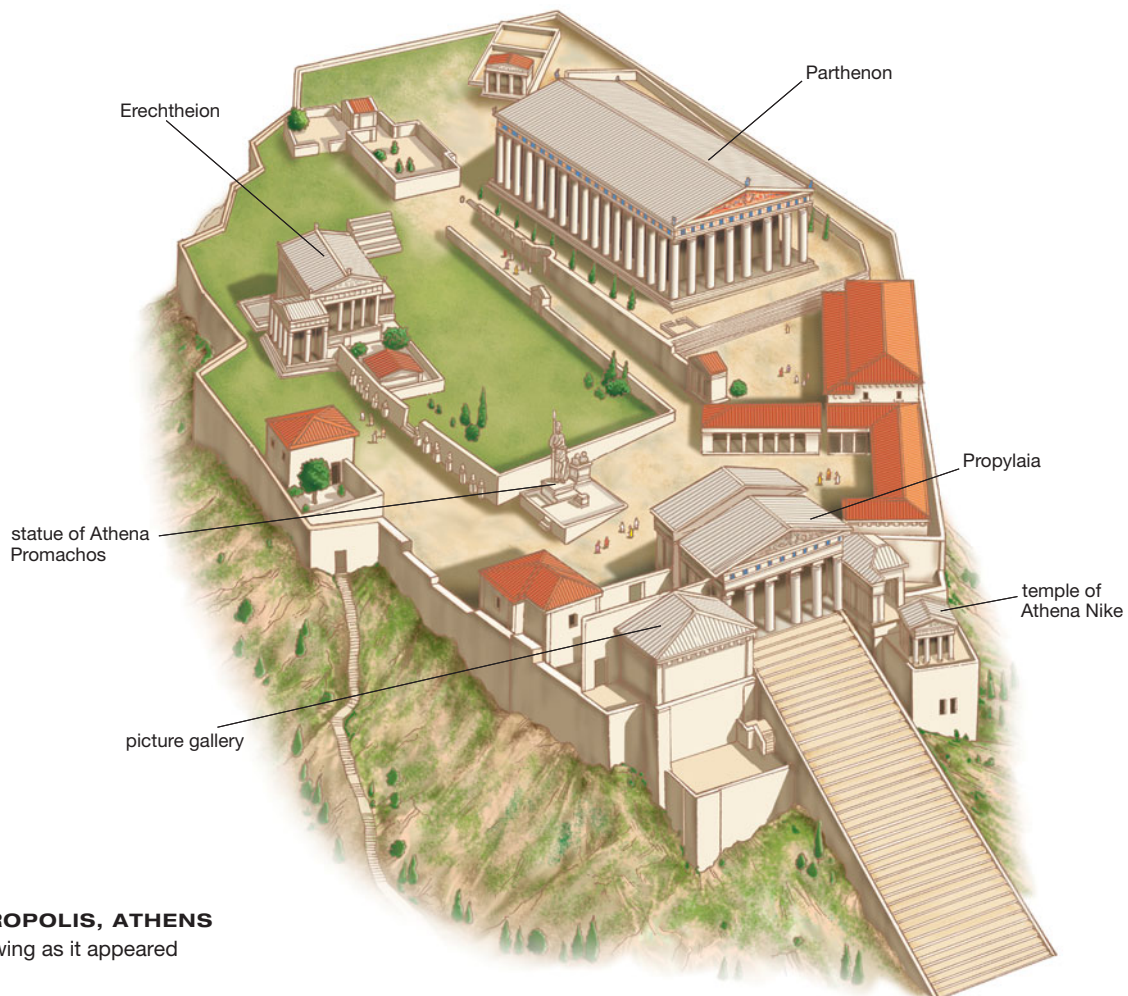
Athens originated as a Neolithic **akropolis**, or “city on top of a hill” (*akro* means “high” and *polis* means “city”), that later served as a fortress and sanctuary. As the city grew, the Akropolis became

the religious and ceremonial center devoted primarily to the goddess Athena, the city’s patron and protector.

After Persian troops destroyed the Akropolis in 480 BCE, the Athenians vowed to keep it in ruins as a memorial, but Perikles convinced them to rebuild it, arguing that this project honored the gods, especially Athena, who had helped the Greeks defeat the Persians. Perikles intended to create a visual expression of Athenian values and civic pride that would bolster the city’s status as the capital of the empire he was instrumental in building. He chose his close friend Pheidias, a renowned sculptor, to supervise the rebuilding and assembled under him the most talented artists in Athens.

The cost and labor involved in this undertaking were staggering. Large quantities of gold, ivory, and exotic woods had to be imported. Some 22,000 tons of marble were transported 10 miles from mountain quarries to city workshops. Perikles was severely criticized by his political opponents for this extravagance, but it never cost him popular support. In fact, many working-class Athenians—laborers, carpenters, masons, sculptors, and the farmers and merchants who kept them supplied and fed—benefited from his expenditures.

Work on the **AKROPOLIS** continued throughout the fifth century BCE (**FIG. 5-35**). Visitors in 400 BCE would have climbed



5-35 • THE AKROPOLIS, ATHENS
Reconstruction drawing as it appeared
c. 447–432 BCE.



5-36 • Kallikrates and Iktinos **VIEW (A) AND PLAN (B) OF THE PARTHENON**

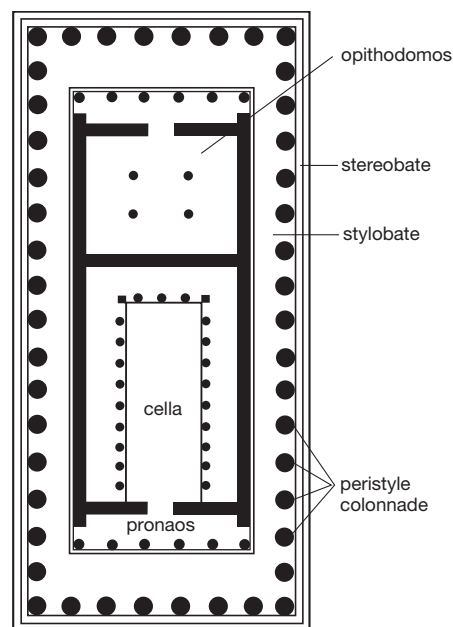
Akropolis, Athens. 447–432 BCE. Pentelic marble. Photograph: view from the northwest.

* **Explore** the architectural panoramas of the Parthenon on myartslab.com

a steep ramp on the west side of the hill (in the foreground of FIGURE 5-35) to the sanctuary entrance, perhaps pausing to admire the small temple dedicated to Athena Nike (Athena as goddess of victory in war), poised on a projection of rock above the ramp. After passing through an impressive porticoed gatehouse called the Propylaia, they would have seen a huge bronze figure of Athena Promachos (the Defender), designed and executed by Pheidias between about 465 and 455 BCE. Sailors entering the Athenian port of Piraeus, about 10 miles away, could see the sun reflected off her helmet and spear tip. Behind this statue was a walled precinct that enclosed the Erechtheion, a temple dedicated to several deities, and to its right was the largest building on the Akropolis—the Parthenon, a temple dedicated to Athena Parthenos (the Virgin). Visitors approached the temple from its northwest corner, instantly grasping the imposing width and depth of this building, isolated like a work of sculpture elevated on a pedestal.

THE PARTHENON

Sometime around 490 BCE, Athenians had begun work on a temple to Athena Parthenos that was still unfinished when the Persians sacked the Akropolis a decade later. In 447 BCE Perikles



commissioned the architects Kallikrates and Iktinos to design a larger temple using the existing foundation and stone elements. The finest white marble was used throughout—even on the roof, in place of the more usual terra-cotta tiles (FIG. 5-36). The planning and execution of the Parthenon (dedicated in 438 BCE) required extraordinary mathematical and mechanical skills and would have been impossible without a large contingent of distinguished architects and builders, as well as talented sculptors and painters. The



**5-37 • PHOTOGRAPHIC MOCK-UP OF THE EAST PEDIMENT OF THE PARTHENON
(USING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXTANT MARBLE SCULPTURE)**

c. 447–432 BCE. The gap in the center represents the space that would have been occupied by the missing sculpture. The pediment is over 90 feet (27.45 m) long; the central space of about 40 feet (12.2 m) is missing.

result is as much a testament to Pheidias' administrative skills as his artistic vision, since he supervised the entire project.

One key to the Parthenon's sense of harmony and balance is an attention to proportions—especially the ratio of 4:9, expressing the relationship of breadth to length and the relationship of column diameter to space between columns. Also important are subtle refinements of design, deviations from absolute regularity to create a harmonious effect when the building was actually viewed. For example, since long, straight horizontal lines seem to sag when seen from a distance, base and entablature curve slightly upward to correct this optical distortion. The columns have a gentle swelling (entasis) and tilt inward slightly from bottom to top; the corners are strengthened visually by reducing the space between columns at those points. These subtle refinements in the arrangement of seemingly regular elements give the Parthenon a buoyant organic appearance and assure that it will not look like a heavy, lifeless stone box. The significance of their achievement was clear to its builders—Iktinos even wrote a book on the proportions of this masterpiece.

The sculptural decoration of the Parthenon reflects Pheidias' unifying aesthetic vision, but it also conveys a number of political and ideological themes: the triumph of the democratic Greek city-states over imperial Persia, the preeminence of Athens thanks to the favor of Athena, and the triumph of an enlightened Greek civilization over despotism and barbarism.

THE PEDIMENTS As with most temples, sculpture in the round filled both pediments of the Parthenon, set on the deep shelf of the cornice and secured to the wall with metal pins. Unfortunately, much has been damaged or lost over the centuries (also see “Who Owns the Art?” page 133). Using the locations of the pinholes and weathering marks on the cornice, and also drawings

made by French artist Jacques Carrey (1649–1726) on a visit to Athens in 1674, scholars have been able to determine the placement of surviving statues and infer the poses of missing ones. We know the subjects from the descriptions of the second century CE Greek writer Pausanias. The west pediment sculpture, facing the entrance to the Akropolis, presented the contest Athena won over the sea god Poseidon for rule over the Athenians. The east pediment figures, above the entrance to the cella, portrayed the birth of Athena, fully grown and clad in armor, from the brow of her father, Zeus.

The statues from the east pediment are the best preserved of the two groups (FIG. 5-37). Flanking the missing central figures—probably Zeus seated on a throne with the newborn adult Athena standing at his side—were groups of goddesses and a single male figure. In the left corner was the sun god Helios in his horse-drawn chariot rising from the sea, while at the right the moon goddess Selene descends in her chariot to the sea, the head of her tired horse hanging over the cornice. The reclining male nude, whose relaxed pose fits so easily into the left pediment, has been identified as either Herakles with his lion's skin or Dionysos (god of wine) lying on a panther skin. The two seated women may be the earth and grain goddesses Demeter and Persephone. The running female figure just to the left of center is Iris, messenger of the gods, already spreading the news of Athena's birth.

The three interlocked female figures on the right side who seem to be awakening from a deep sleep, two sitting upright and one reclining, are probably Hestia (a sister of Zeus and the goddess of the hearth), Dione (one of Zeus's many consorts), and her daughter, Aphrodite. The sculptor, whether Pheidias or a follower, expertly rendered the female form beneath the fall of draperies, which both cover and reveal their bodies while uniting the three figures into a single mass.



THE DORIC FRIEZE The all-marble Parthenon had two sculptured friezes, one above the outer peristyle and another atop the cella wall inside. The Doric frieze on the exterior had 92 metope reliefs depicting legendary battles, symbolized by combat between two representative figures: a centaur against a Lapith (a legendary people of pre-Hellenic times); a god against a Titan; a Greek

against a Trojan; a Greek against an Amazon (one of the mythical tribe of female warriors sometimes said to be the daughters of the war god Ares). Each of these mythic struggles represented for the Greeks the triumph of reason over unbridled animal passion.

Among the best-preserved metope reliefs are several depicting the battle between Lapiths and centaurs from the south side of the

Parthenon. The panel shown here (FIG. 5-38) presents a pause within the fluid struggle, a timeless image standing for an extended historical episode. Forms are reduced to their most characteristic essentials, and so dramatic is the chiasmic (X-shaped) composition that we easily accept its visual contradictions. The Lapith is caught at an instant of total equilibrium. What could be a grueling tug-of-war between a man and a man-beast has been transformed into an athletic ballet, choreographed to show off the Lapith warrior's flexed muscles and graceful movements against the implausible backdrop of his carefully draped cloak.



5-38 • LAPITH FIGHTING A CENTAUR

Metope relief from the Doric frieze on the south side of the Parthenon. c. 447–432 BCE. Marble, height 56" (1.42 m). British Museum, London.



5-39 • HORSEMEN

Detail of the Procession, from the Ionic frieze on the north side of the Parthenon. c. 447–432 BCE. Marble, height 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (106 cm). British Museum, London.

THE PROCESSIONAL FRIEZE Enclosed within the Parthenon's Doric peristyle, a continuous, 525-foot-long Ionic frieze ran along the exterior wall of the cella. Since the eighteenth century, its subject has been seen as a procession celebrating the festival that took place in Athens every four years, when the women of the city wove a new wool peplos and carried it to the Akropolis to clothe an ancient wooden cult statue of Athena. Both the skilled riders in the procession (**FIG. 5-39**), and the graceful but physically sturdy young walkers (**FIG. 5-40**), are representative types, ideal inhabitants of a successful city-state. The underlying message of

the frieze as a whole is that the Athenians are a healthy, vigorous people, united in a democratic civic body looked upon with favor by the gods. The people are inseparable from and symbolic of the city itself.

A more recent interpretation by art historian Joan Connelly, however, has challenged the traditional reading of the frieze as an ideal rendering of a contemporary event. She argues that—consistent with what we know of temple decoration elsewhere—what is portrayed is not contemporary but mythological history—the legendary Athenian king Erechtheus, who, following the advice



5-40 • YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN

Detail of the Procession, from the Ionic frieze on the east side of the Parthenon. c. 447–432 BCE. Marble, height 3'6" (1.08 m). Musée du Louvre, Paris.

ART AND ITS CONTEXTS | Who Owns the Art? The Elgin Marbles and the Euphronios Krater

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Thomas Bruce, the British Earl of Elgin and ambassador to Constantinople, acquired much of the surviving sculpture from the Parthenon, which was at that time being used for military purposes. He shipped it back to London in 1801 to decorate a lavish mansion for himself and his wife; but by the time he returned to England, his wife had left him and the ancient treasures were at the center of a financial dispute and had to be sold. Referred to as the Elgin Marbles, most of the sculpture is now in the British Museum, including all the elements seen in FIGURE 5-37. The Greek government has tried unsuccessfully to have the Elgin Marbles returned.

Recently, another Greek treasure has been in the news. In 1972, a krater, painted by Euphronios and depicting the death of the

warrior Sarpedon during the Trojan War, had been purchased by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (see “A Closer Look,” page 119). Museum officials were told that it had come from a private collection, and it became the centerpiece of the museum’s galleries of Greek vessels. But in 1995, Italian and Swiss investigators raided a warehouse in Geneva, Switzerland, where they found documents showing that the krater had been stolen from an Etruscan tomb near Rome. The Italian government demanded its return. The controversy was only resolved in 2006. The krater, along with other objects known to have been stolen from other Italian sites, were returned, and the Metropolitan Museum will display pieces “of equal beauty” under long-term loan agreements with Italy.

of the oracle at Delphi, sacrificed one of his own daughters to save the city of Athens from an external enemy. This theme, also incorporating a procession, would have had obvious resonance with the recent Athenian victory over the Persians.

As with the metope relief of a Lapith fighting a centaur (see FIG. 5-38), viewers of the processional frieze easily accept its disproportions, spatial compression and incongruities, and such implausible compositional features as men and women standing as tall as rearing horses. Carefully planned rhythmic variations contribute to the effectiveness of the frieze. Horses plunge ahead at full gallop; women proceed with a slow, stately step, while men pause to look back at the progress of those behind them.

In executing the frieze, the sculptors took into account the spectators’ low viewpoint and the dim lighting inside the peristyle. They carved the top of the frieze band in higher relief than the lower part, thus tilting the figures out to catch the reflected light from the pavement, permitting a clearer reading of the action. The subtleties in the sculpture may not have been as evident to Athenians in the fifth century BCE as they are now: the frieze, seen at the top of a high wall and between columns, was originally completely painted. Figures in red and ocher, accented with glittering gold and real metal details, were set against a contrasting background of dark blue.

STATUE OF ATHENA PARTHENOS After having explored the considerable richness of sculpture on the exterior of the Parthenon, with permission, viewers could have climbed the east steps to look into the cella, where they would have seen Pheidias’ colossal gold and ivory statue of Athena—outfitted in armor and holding a shield in one hand and a winged Nike (Victory) in the other—which was installed in the temple and dedicated 438 BCE (FIG. 5-41). The original has completely vanished, but descriptions and later copies allow us a clear sense of its appearance and its imposing size, looming nearly 40 feet tall.



5-41 • RE-CREATION OF PHEIDIAS’ HUGE GOLD AND IVORY FIGURE OF ATHENA
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

TECHNIQUE | “The Canon” of Polykleitos

Just as Greek architects defined and followed a set of standards for ideal temple design, Greek sculptors sought an ideal for representing the human body. Studying actual human beings closely and selecting those human attributes they considered most desirable—such as regular facial features, smooth skin, and particular body proportions—sculptors combined them into a single ideal of physical perfection.

The best-known theorist of the High Classical period was the sculptor Polykleitos of Argos. About 450 BCE, balancing careful observation with generalizing **idealization**, he developed a set of rules for constructing what he considered the ideal human figure, which he set down in a treatise called “The Canon” (*kanon* is Greek for “measure,” “rule,” or “law”). To illustrate his theory, Polykleitos created a bronze statue of a standing man carrying a spear—perhaps the hero Achilles. Neither the treatise nor the original statue has survived, but both were widely discussed in the writings of his contemporaries, and later Roman artists made marble copies of the *Spear Bearer* (*Doryphoros*). By studying these copies, scholars have tried to determine the set of measurements that defined ideal human proportions in Polykleitos’ canon.

The canon included a system of ratios between a basic unit and the length of various body parts. Some studies suggest that this basic unit may have been the length of the figure’s index finger or the width of its hand across the knuckles; others suggest that it was the height of the head from chin to hairline. The canon also included guidelines for *symmetria* (“commensurability”), by which Polykleitos meant the relationship of body parts to one another. In the *Spear Bearer*, he explored not only proportions, but also the diagonally counterbalanced relationships between weight-bearing and relaxed legs and arms around a central axis, referred to as *contrapposto*.

The Roman marble copy of the **SPEAR BEARER (FIG. 5-42)** shows a male athlete, perfectly balanced, with the whole weight of the upper body supported over the straight (engaged) right leg. The left leg is bent at the knee, with the left foot poised on the ball of the foot, suggesting the weight shift of preceding and succeeding movement. The pattern of tension and relaxation is reversed in the arrangement of the arms, with the right relaxed on the engaged side, and the left bent to support the weight of the (missing) spear. The pronounced tilt of the *Spear Bearer*’s hipline accommodates the raising of the left foot onto its ball, and the head is turned toward the same side as the engaged leg. Hints of this dynamically balanced body pose—characteristic of High Classical standing figure sculpture—had already appeared in the Kritios Boy (see FIG. 5-26) and it was developed further in the Riace Warrior (see FIG. 5-29).

5-42 • Polykleitos **SPEAR BEARER (DORYPHOROS)**

Roman copy after the original bronze of c. 450–440 BCE. Marble, height 6’11” (2.12 m); tree trunk and brace strut are Roman additions. National Archaeological Museum, Naples.



THE PROPYLAIA AND THE ERECHTHEION

Upon completion of the Parthenon, work began in 437 on the monumental gatehouse, the Propylaia (**FIG. 5-43**), that had been part of the original design of the Akropolis complex. The Propylaia had no sculptural decoration, but its north wing was originally a dining hall that later became the earliest known museum (meaning “home of the Muses”), a gallery built specifically to house a collection of paintings for public view.

Construction of the **ERECHTHEION** (**FIG. 5-44**), the second important temple erected on the Akropolis under Perikles’ building program, began in the 430s BCE and ended in 406 BCE, just before the fall of Athens to Sparta. The asymmetrical plan reflects the building’s multiple functions in housing several shrines,

and also conformed to the sharply sloping terrain on which it is located. The Erechtheion stands on the site of the mythical contest between the sea god Poseidon and Athena for patronage over Athens. During this contest, Poseidon struck a rock with his trident (three-pronged harpoon), bringing forth a spout of water, but Athena gave an olive tree to Athens and won the contest. The Athenians enclosed what they believed to be this sacred rock, bearing the marks of the trident, in the Erechtheion’s north porch. The Erechtheion also housed the venerable wooden cult statue of Athena that was the center of the Panathenaic festival.

The north and east porches of the Erechtheion have come to epitomize the Ionic order, serving as an important model for European architects since the eighteenth century. Taller and more



5-43 • THE MONUMENTAL ENTRANCE TO THE AKROPOLIS, ATHENS

The Propylaia (Mnesikles) with the Temple of Athena Nike (Kallikrates) on the bastion at the right. c. 437–423 BCE.



5-44 • ERECHTHEION

Akropolis, Athens. 430s–406 BCE. View from the east. Porch of the Maidens at left; the north porch can be seen through the columns of the east wall.

slender in proportion that the Doric, the Ionic order also has richer and more elaborately carved decoration (see “The Greek Orders,” page 110). The columns rise from molded bases and end in volute (spiral) capitals; the frieze is continuous.

The **PORCH OF THE MAIDENS** (FIG. 5-45), on the south side facing the Parthenon, is even more famous. Raised on a high base, its six stately caryatids support an Ionic entablature made up of bands of carved molding. In a pose characteristic of Classical figures, each caryatid’s weight is supported on one engaged leg, while the free leg, bent at the knee, rests on the ball of the foot. The three caryatids on the left have their right legs engaged, and the three on the right have their left legs engaged, creating a sense of closure, symmetry, and rhythm.

5-45 • PORCH OF THE MAIDENS (SOUTH PORCH), ERECHTHEION

Akropolis, Athens. Porch c. 420–410 BCE.





5-46 • NIKE (VICTORY) ADJUSTING HER SANDAL

Fragment of relief decoration from the parapet (now destroyed), Temple of Athena Nike, Akropolis, Athens. Last quarter of the 5th century (perhaps 410–405) BCE. Marble, height 3'6" (1.06 m). Akropolis Museum, Athens.

THE TEMPLE OF ATHENA NIKE

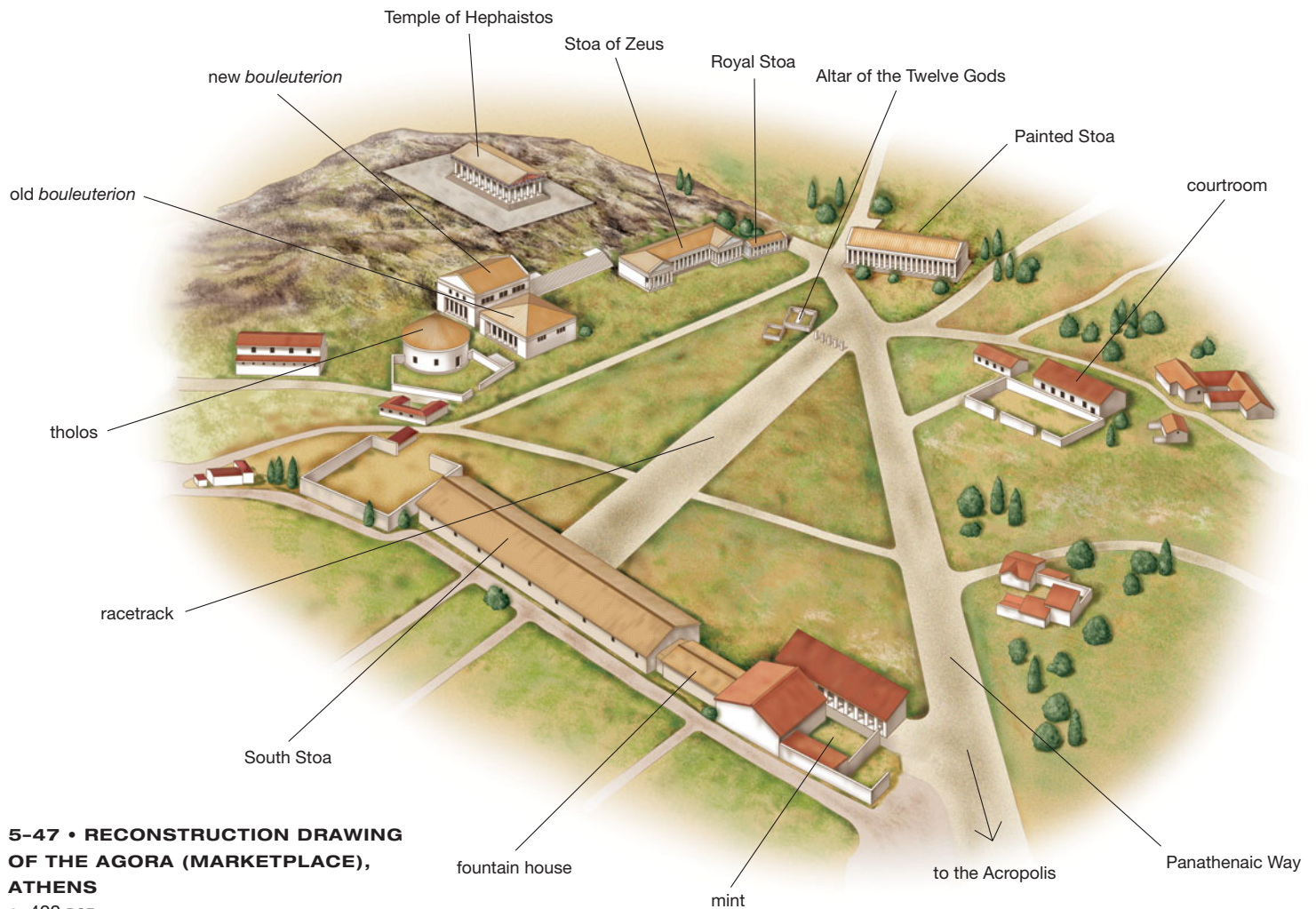
The Ionic Temple of Athena Nike (victory in war), located south of the Propylaia, was designed and built about 425 BCE, probably by Kallikrates (see FIG. 5-43). Reduced to rubble during the Turkish occupation of Greece in the seventeenth century CE, the temple has since been rebuilt. Its diminutive size—about 27 by 19 feet—and refined Ionic decoration are in marked contrast to the weightier Doric Propylaia adjacent to it.

Between 410 and 405 BCE, this temple was surrounded by a parapet or low wall faced with sculptured panels depicting Athena presiding over the preparation of a celebration by winged Nikes (victory figures). The parapet no longer exists, but some panels have survived, including the celebrated **NIKE (VICTORY) ADJUSTING HER SANDAL** (FIG. 5-46). The figure bends forward gracefully, allowing her chiton (tunic) to slip off one shoulder. Her large overlapping wings effectively balance her unstable pose. Unlike the decorative swirls of heavy fabric covering the Parthenon goddesses, or the weighty, pleated robes of the Erechtheion caryatids, the textile covering this Nike appears delicate and light, clinging to her body like wet silk, one of the most discreetly erotic images in ancient art.

THE ATHENIAN AGORA

In Athens, as in most cities of ancient Greece, commercial, civic, and social life revolved around the marketplace, or **agora**. The Athenian Agora, at the foot of the Akropolis, began as an open space where farmers and artisans displayed their wares. Over time, public and private structures were erected on both sides of the Panathenaic Way, a ceremonial road used during an important festival in honor of Athena (FIG. 5-47). A stone drainage system was installed to prevent flooding, and a large fountain house was built to provide water for surrounding homes, administrative buildings, and shops (see “Women at a Fountain House,” page 139). By 400 BCE, the Agora contained several religious and administrative structures and even a small racetrack. The Agora also had the city mint, its military headquarters, and two buildings devoted to court business.

In design, the stoa, a distinctively Greek structure found nearly everywhere people gathered, ranged from a simple roof held up by columns to a substantial, sometimes architecturally impressive, building with two stories and shops along one side.



**5-47 • RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING
OF THE AGORA (MARKETPLACE),
ATHENS**
c. 400 BCE.

Stoas offered protection from the sun and rain, and provided a place for strolling and talking business, politics, or philosophy. While city business could be, and often was, conducted in the stoas, agora districts also came to include buildings with specific administrative functions.

In the Athenian Agora, the 500-member *boule*, or council, met in a building called the *bouleuterion*. This structure, built before 450 BCE but probably after the Persian destruction of Athens in 480 BCE, has a simple rectangular plan with a vestibule and large meeting room. Near the end of the fifth century BCE, a new *bouleuterion* was constructed to the west of the old one. This too had a rectangular plan. The interior, however, may have had permanent tiered seating arranged in an ascending semicircle around a ground-level **podium**, or raised platform.

Nearby was a small, round building with six columns supporting a conical roof, a type of structure known as a tholos. Built about 465 BCE, this tholos was the meeting place of the 50-member executive committee of the boule. The committee members dined there at the city's expense, and a few of them always spent the night there in order to be available for any pressing business that might arise.

Private houses surrounded the Agora. Compared with the often grand public buildings, houses of the fifth century BCE in Athens were rarely more than simple rectangular structures of stucco-faced mud brick with wooden posts and lintels supporting roofs of terra-cotta tiles. Rooms were small and included a day-room in which women could sew, weave, and do other chores, a dining room with couches for reclining around a table, a kitchen, bedrooms, and occasionally an indoor bathroom. Where space was not at a premium, houses sometimes opened onto small courtyards or porches.

CITY PLANS

In older Greek cities such as Athens, buildings and streets developed in conformance to the needs of their inhabitants and the requirements of the terrain. As early as the eighth century BCE, however, builders in some western Greek settlements began to use a mathematical concept of urban development based on the **orthogonal** (or grid) plan. New cities or rebuilt sections of old cities were laid out on straight, evenly spaced parallel streets that intersected at right angles to create rectangular blocks. These blocks were then subdivided into identical building plots.

Since most women in ancient Greece were confined to their homes, their daily trip to the communal well or fountain house in the agora was an important event. The Archaic ceramic artist known as the Priam Painter has recorded a vignette from this aspect of Greek city life on a black-figure **hydria** (water jug) (**FIG. 5-48**). In the shade of a Doric-columned porch, three women fill hydriae just like the one on which they are painted. A fourth balances her empty jug on her head as she waits, while a fifth woman, without a jug, seems to be waving a greeting to someone. The building is designed like a stoa, open on one side, but having animal-head spigots on three walls. The Doric columns support a Doric entablature with an architrave above the colonnade and a colorful frieze—here black-and-white blocks replace carved metopes.

5-48 • Priam Painter WOMEN AT A FOUNTAIN HOUSE
520–510 BCE. Black-figure decoration on a hydria. Ceramic, height of hydria 20 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (53 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. William Francis Warden Fund. (61.195)



During the Classical period, Hippodamos of Miletos, a major urban planner of the fifth century BCE, held views on the reasoned perfectibility of urban design akin to those of the Athenian philosophers (such as Socrates) and artists (such as Polykleitos). He believed the ideal city should be limited to 10,000 citizens divided into three classes—artists, farmers, and soldiers—and three zones—sacred, public, and private. The basic Hippodamian plot was a square 600 feet on each side, divided into quarters. Each quarter was subdivided into six rectangular building plots measuring 100 by 150 feet, a scheme still widely used in American and European cities and suburbs.

STELE SCULPTURE

Upright stone slabs called stelai (singular, stele) were used in Greek cemeteries as gravestones, carved in low relief with an image (actual or allegorical) of the person(s) to be remembered. Instead of the proud warriors or athletes used in the Archaic period, however, Classical stelai place figures in personal or domestic contexts

that often feature women and children. A touching mid-fifth-century BCE example found on the island of Paros portrays a young girl, seemingly bidding farewell to her pet birds, one of which she kisses on the beak (**FIG. 5-49**). She wears a loose peplos, which parts at the side to disclose the tender flesh underneath and clings elsewhere over her body to reveal its three-dimensional form. The extraordinary carving recalls the contemporary reliefs of the Parthenon frieze, and like them, this stele would have been painted with color to provide details such as the straps of the girl's sandals or the feathers on her beloved birds.

Another, somewhat later, stele commemorates the relationship between a couple, identified by name across an upper frieze resting on two Doric pilasters (**FIG. 5-50**). The husband Ktesilaos stands casually with crossed legs and joined hands, gazing at his wife Theano, who sits before him on a bench, pulling at her gauzy wrap with her right hand in a gesture that is often associated with Greek brides. Presumably this was a tombstone for a joint grave, since both names are inscribed on it, but we do not know which of

the two might have died first, leaving behind a mate to mourn and memorialize by commissioning this stele. The air of introspective melancholy here, as well as the softness and delicacy of both flesh and fabric, seem to point forward out of the High Classical period and into the increased sense of narrative and delicacy that was to characterize the fourth century BCE.



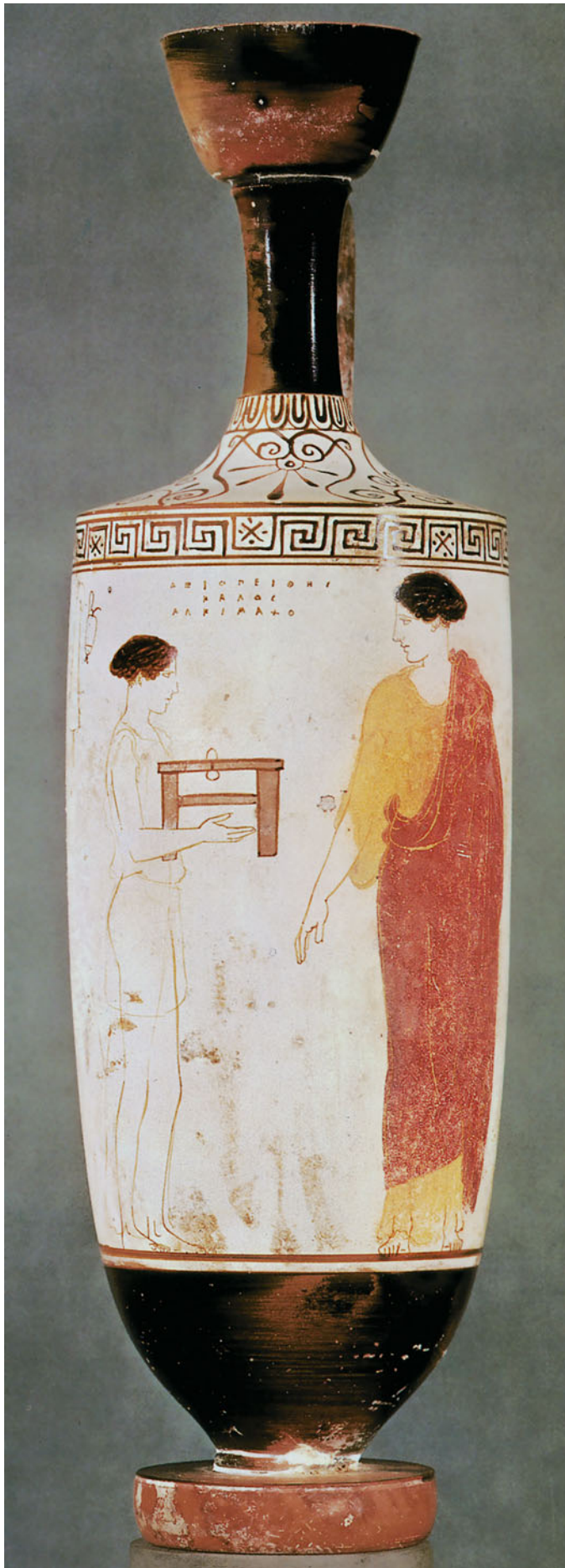
5-49 • GRAVE STELE OF A LITTLE GIRL
c. 450–440 BCE. Marble, height 31½" (80 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



5-50 • GRAVE STELE OF KTESILAOS AND THEANO
c. 400 BCE. Marble, height 36⅝" (93 cm). National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

PAINTING

The Painted Stoa built on the north side of the Athenian Agora (see FIG. 5-47) about 460 BCE is known to have been decorated with paintings (hence its name) by the most famous artists of the time, including Polygnotos of Thasos (active c. 475–450 BCE). His contemporaries praised his talent for creating the illusion of spatial recession in landscapes, rendering female figures clothed in transparent draperies, and conveying through facial expressions the full range of human emotions. Ancient writers described his painting, as well as other famous works, enthusiastically, but nothing survives for us to see.



5-51 • Style of the Achilles Painter WOMAN AND MAID
c. 450–440 BCE. White-ground lekythos. Ceramic, with additional painting in tempera, height 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (38.4 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Francis Bartlett Donation of 1912. (13.201)

White-ground ceramic painting, however, may echo the style of lost contemporary wall and panel painting. In this technique, painters first applied refined white slip as the ground on which they painted designs with liquid slip. High Classical white-ground painting became a specialty of Athenian potters. Artists enhanced the fired vessel with a full range of colors using paints made by mixing tints with white clay, and also using **tempera**, an opaque, water-based medium mixed with glue or egg white. This fragile decoration deteriorated easily, and for that reason seems to have been favored for funerary, votive, and other non-utilitarian vessels.

Tall, slender, one-handed white-ground **lekythoi** were used to pour libations during religious rituals. Some convey grief and loss, with scenes of departing figures bidding farewell. Others depict grave stelai draped with garlands. Still others envision the deceased returned to the prime of life and engaged in a seemingly everyday activity. A white-ground lekythos, dated about 450–440 BCE, shows a young servant girl carrying a stool for a small chest of valuables to a well-dressed woman of regal bearing, the dead person whom the vessel memorializes (**FIG. 5-51**). As on the stele of Ktesilaos and Theano (see **FIG. 5-50**), the scene portrayed here contains no overt signs of grief, but a quiet sadness pervades it. The two figures seem to inhabit different worlds, their glances somehow failing to meet.

THE LATE CLASSICAL PERIOD, c. 400–323 BCE

After the Spartans defeated Athens in 404 BCE, they set up a pro-Spartan government so oppressive that within a year the Athenians rebelled against it, killed its leader, Kritias, and restored democracy. Athens recovered its independence and its economy revived, but it never regained its dominant political and military status. It did, however, retain its reputation as a center of artistic and intellectual life. In 387 BCE, the great philosopher-teacher Plato founded a school just outside Athens, as his student Aristotle did later. Among Aristotle's students was young Alexander of Macedon, known to history as Alexander the Great.

In 359 BCE, a crafty and energetic warrior, Philip II, had come to the throne of Macedon. In 338, he defeated Athens and rapidly conquered the other Greek cities. When he was assassinated two years later, his kingdom passed to his 20-year-old son, Alexander, who consolidated his power and led a united Greece in a war of revenge and conquest against the Persians. In 334 BCE, he crushed the Persian army and conquered Syria and Phoenicia. By 331, he had occupied Egypt and founded the seaport he named Alexandria. The Egyptian priests of Amun recognized him as the son



MAP 5-2 • HELLENISTIC GREECE

Alexander the Great created a Greek empire that extended from the Greek mainland and Egypt across Asia Minor and as far east as India.

of a god, an idea he readily adopted. That same year, he reached the Persian capital of Persepolis and continued east until reaching present-day Pakistan in 326 BCE; his troops then refused to go any farther (**MAP 5-2**). On the way home in 323 BCE, Alexander died of a fever. He was only 33 years old.

Changing political conditions never seriously dampened the Greeks' artistic creativity. Indeed, artists experimented widely with new subjects and styles. Although they maintained a Classical approach to composition and form, they relaxed its conventions, supported by a sophisticated new group of patrons drawn from the courts of Philip and Alexander, wealthy aristocrats in Asia Minor, and foreign aristocrats eager to import Greek works and, sometimes, Greek artists.

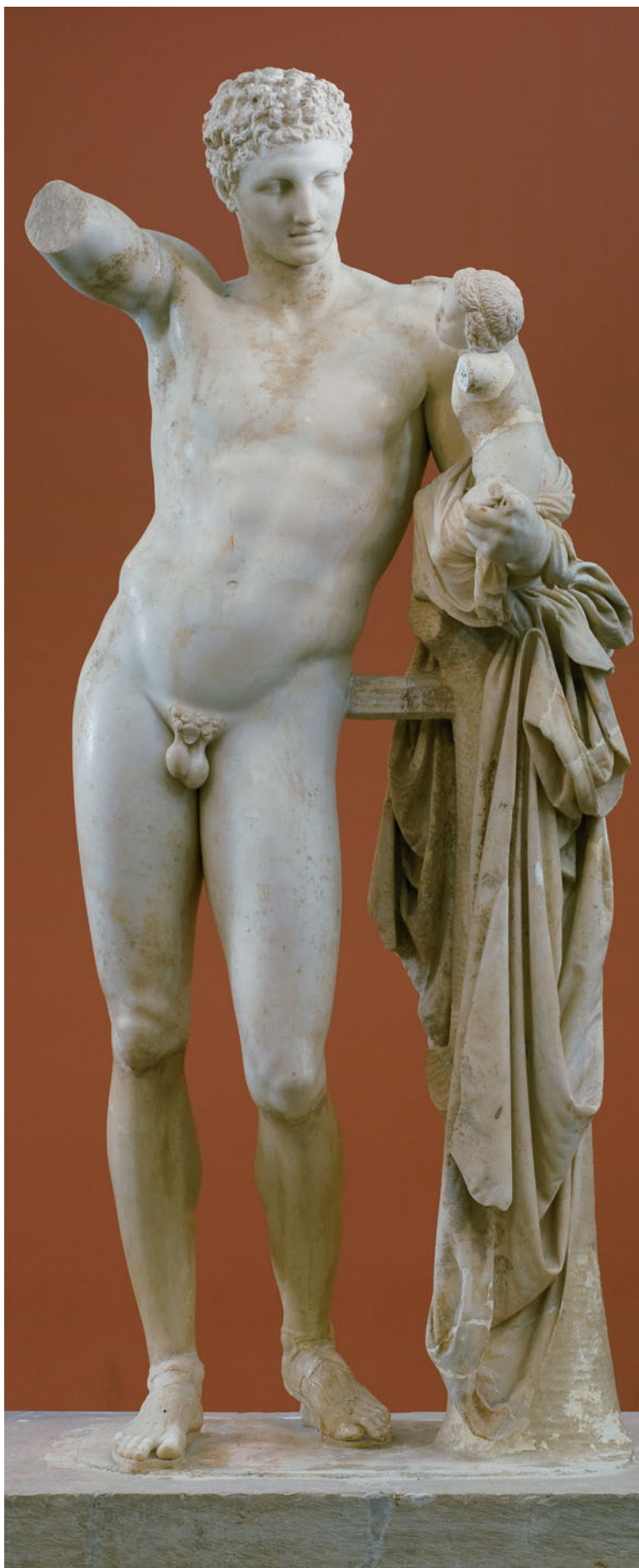
SCULPTURE

Throughout the fifth century BCE, sculptors had accepted and worked within standards for the ideal proportions and forms of the human figure, as established by Pheidias and Polykleitos at mid century. But fourth-century BCE artists began to challenge and modify those standards. On mainland Greece, in particular,

a new canon of proportions associated with the sculptor Lysippos emerged for male figures—now eight or more “heads” tall rather than the six-and-a-half or seven-head height of earlier works. The calm, noble detachment characteristic of High Classical figures gave way to more sensitively rendered expressions of wistful introspection, dreaminess, even fleeting anxiety or lightheartedness.

PRAXITELES According to the Greek traveler Pausanias, writing in the second century CE, the Late Classical sculptor Praxiteles (active in Athens from about 370 to 335 BCE or later) carved a “Hermes of stone who carries the infant Dionysos” for the Temple of Hera at Olympia. In 1875, just such a statue depicting the messenger god Hermes teasing the baby Dionysos with a bunch of grapes was discovered in the ruins of this temple (**FIG. 5-52**). Initially accepted as an original work of Praxiteles because of its high quality, recent studies hold that it is probably an excellent Roman or Hellenistic copy.

The sculpture highlights the differences between the fourth- and fifth-century BCE Classical styles. Hermes has a smaller head and a more sensual and sinuous body than Polykleitos' *Spear*



Bearer (see “‘The Canon’ of Polykleitos,” page 134). His off-balance, S-curving pose, requires him to lean on a post—a clear contrast with the balanced posture of Polykleitos’ work. Praxiteles also created a sensuous play of contrasting textures over the figure’s surface, juxtaposing the gleam of smooth flesh with crumpled draperies and rough locks of hair. Praxiteles humanizes his subject with a hint of narrative—two gods, one a loving adult and the other a playful child, caught in a moment of absorbed companionship.

Around 350 BCE, Praxiteles created a daring statue of Aphrodite for the city of Knidos in Asia Minor. Although artists of the fifth century BCE had begun to hint boldly at the naked female body beneath tissue-thin drapery as in the panel showing a Nike adjusting her sandal (see FIG. 5-46)—this Aphrodite was apparently the first statue by a well-known Greek sculptor to depict a fully nude woman, and it set a new standard (FIG. 5-53). Although nudity among athletic young men was admired in Greek society, nudity among women was seen as a sign of low character. The acceptance of nudity in statues of Aphrodite may be related to the gradual merging of the Greeks’ concept of this goddess with some of the characteristics of the Phoenician goddess Astarte (the Babylonian Ishtar), who was nearly always shown nude in Near Eastern art.

In the version of Praxiteles’ statue seen here (actually a composite of two Roman copies), the goddess is preparing to take a bath, with a water jug and her discarded clothing at her side. Her hand is caught in a gesture of modesty that only calls attention to her nudity. Her strong and well-toned body leans forward slightly, with one projecting knee in a seductive pose that emphasizes the swelling forms of her thighs and abdomen. According to an old legend, the sculpture was so realistic that Aphrodite herself journeyed to Knidos to see it and cried out in shock, “Where did Praxiteles see me naked?” The Knidians were so proud of their Aphrodite that they placed it in an open shrine where people could view it from every side. Hellenistic and Roman copies probably numbered in the hundreds, and nearly 50 survive in various collections today.

5-52 • Praxiteles or his followers **HERMES AND THE INFANT DIONYSOS**

Probably a Hellenistic or Roman copy after a Late Classical 4th-century BCE original. Marble, with remnants of red paint on the lips and hair, height 7’1” (2.15 m). Archaeological Museum, Olympia.

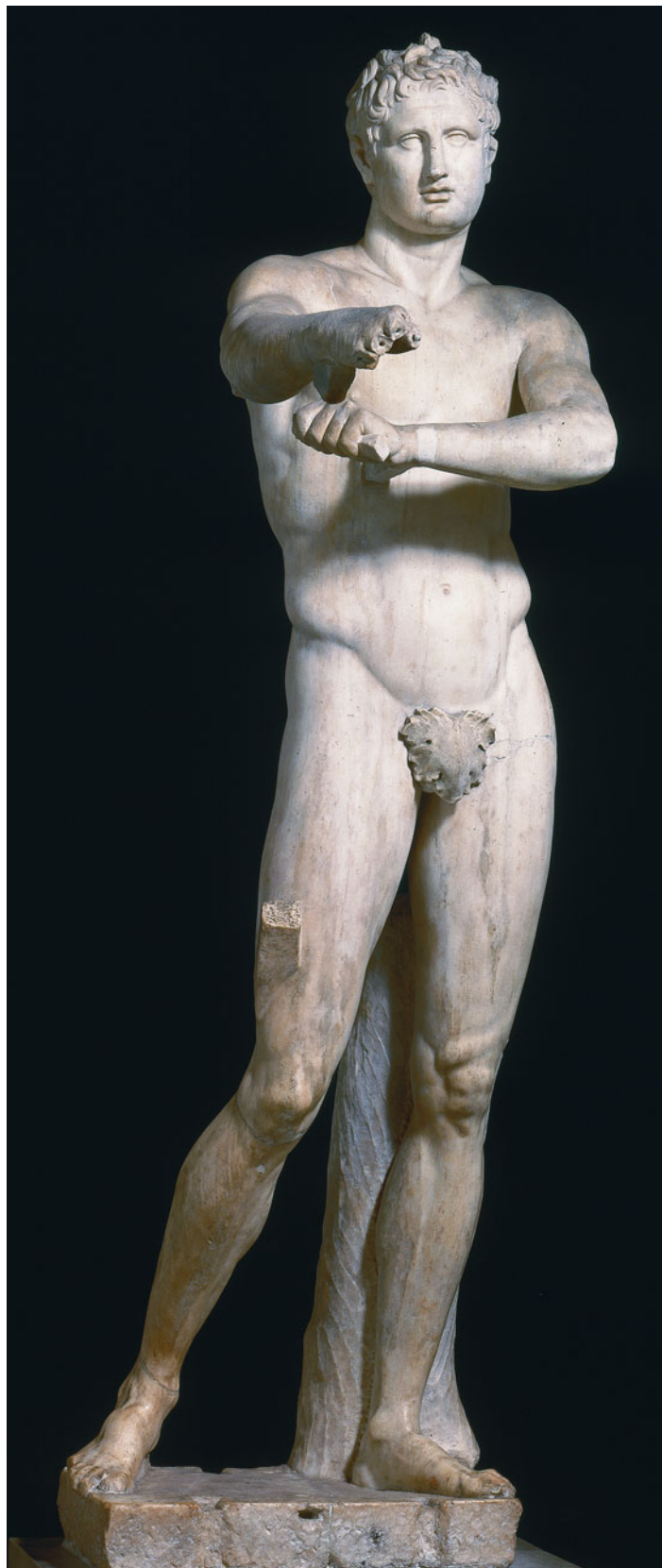
Discovered in the rubble of the ruined Temple of Hera at Olympia in 1875, this statue is now widely accepted as an outstanding Roman or Hellenistic copy. Support for this conclusion comes from certain elements typical of Roman sculpture: Hermes’ sandals, which recent studies suggest are not accurate for a fourth-century BCE date; the supporting element of crumpled fabric covering a tree stump; and the use of a reinforcing strut, or brace, between Hermes’ hip and the tree stump.



5-53 • Praxiteles APHRODITE OF KNIDOS

Composite of two similar Roman copies after the original marble of c. 350 BCE. Marble, height 6'8" (2.04 m). Vatican Museums, Museo Pio Clementino, Gabinetto delle Maschere, Rome.

The head of this figure is from one Roman copy, the body from another. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century CE restorers added the nose, the neck, the right forearm and hand, most of the left arm, and the feet and parts of the legs. This kind of restoration would rarely be undertaken today, but it was frequently done and considered quite acceptable in the past, when archaeologists were trying to put together a body of work documenting the appearance of lost Greek statues.



5-54 • Lysippos MAN SCRAPING HIMSELF (APOXYOMENOS)

Roman copy after the original bronze of c. 350–325 BCE. Marble, height 6'9" (2.06 m). Vatican Museums, Museo Pio Clementino, Gabinetto dell'Apoxyomenos, Rome.

LYSIPPOS Compared to Praxiteles, more details of Lysippos' life are known, and, although none of his original works has survived, there are many copies of the sculpture he produced between c. 350 and 310 BCE. He claimed to be entirely self-taught and asserted that "nature" was his only model, but he must have received some technical training in the vicinity of his home, near Corinth. He expressed great admiration for Polykleitos, but his own figures reflect a different ideal and different proportions. For his famous portrayal of a **MAN SCRAPING HIMSELF (APOXYOMENOS)**, known today only from Roman copies (**FIG. 5-54**), he chose a typical Classical subject—a nude male athlete. But instead of a figure actively engaged in his sport, striding, or standing at ease, Lysippos depicted a young man after his workout, methodically removing oil and dirt from his body with a scraping tool called a strigil.

This tall and slender figure with a relatively small head, makes a telling comparison with Polykleitos' *Spear Bearer* (see "'The Canon' of Polykleitos," page 134). Not only does it reflect a different canon of proportions, but the legs are in a wider stance to counterbalance the outstretched arms, and there is a pronounced curve to the posture. The *Spear Bearer* is contained within fairly simple, compact contours and oriented toward a center-front viewer. In contrast, the arms of the *Man Scraping Himself* break free into the surrounding space, inviting the viewer to move around the statue to absorb its full aspect. Roman authors, who may have been describing the bronze original rather than a marble copy, remarked on the subtle modeling of the statue's elongated body and the spatial extension of its pose.

When Lysippos was summoned to create a portrait of Alexander the Great, he portrayed Alexander as a full-length standing figure with an upraised arm holding a scepter, the same way he posed Zeus. Based on description and later copies, we know Lysippos idealized the ruler as a ruggedly handsome, heavy-featured young man with a large Adam's apple and short, tousled hair. According to the Roman historian Plutarch, Lysippos presented Alexander in a meditative pose, perhaps contemplating grave decisions, waiting to receive divine advice.

THE ART OF THE GOLDSMITH

The detailed, small-scale work of Greek goldsmiths followed the same stylistic trends and achieved the same high standards of technique and execution characterizing other arts. A specialty of Greek goldsmiths was the design of earrings in the form of tiny works of sculpture. They were often placed on the ears of marble statues of goddesses, but they adorned the ears of living women as well. **EARRINGS** dated about 330–300 BCE depict the abducted youth Ganymede caught in the grasp of an eagle (Zeus) (**FIG. 5-55**), a technical *tour-de-force*. Slightly more than 2 inches high, they were hollow-cast using the lost-wax process, no doubt to make them light on the ear. Despite their small size, they capture the drama of their subject, evoking swift movement through space.



5-55 • EARRINGS

c. 330–300 BCE. Hollow-cast gold, height $2\frac{3}{8}$ " (6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1937. (37.11.9–10)

PAINTING AND MOSAICS

Roman observers such as Pliny the Elder praised Greek painters for their skill in capturing the appearance of the real world. Roman patrons also admired Greek murals, and they commissioned copies, in fresco or **mosaic**, to decorate their homes. (Mosaics—created from **tesserae**, small cubes of colored stone or marble—provide a permanent waterproof surface that the Romans used for floors in important rooms.) A first-century CE Roman mosaic, **ALEXANDER THE GREAT CONFRONTS DARIUS III AT THE BATTLE OF ISSOS** (**FIG. 5-56**), for example, replicates a Greek painting of about 310 BCE. Pliny the Elder mentions a painting of this subject by Philoxenos of Eretria, but a new theory claims the original as a work of Helen of Egypt.

Such copies document a growing taste for dramatic narrative subjects in late fourth-century BCE Greek painting. Certainly the scene here is one of violent action, where diagonal disruption and radical foreshortening draw the viewer in and elicit an emotional response. Astride a rearing horse at the left, his hair blowing free and his neck bare, Alexander challenges the helmeted and armored Persian leader, who stretches out his arm in a gesture of defeat and apprehension as his charioteer whisks him back toward safety within the Persian ranks. The mosaicist has created an illusion of solid figures through modeling, mimicking the play of light on three-dimensional surfaces by highlights and shading.

The interest of fourth-century BCE artists in creating believable illusions of the real world was the subject of anecdotes repeated by later writers. One popular legend involved a floral designer named Glykera—widely praised for her artistry in weaving blossoms and greenery into wreaths, swags, and garlands for religious processions



5-56 • ALEXANDER THE GREAT CONFRONTS DARIUS III AT THE BATTLE OF ISSOS

Floor mosaic, Pompeii, Italy. 1st-century BCE Roman copy of a Greek wall painting of c. 310 BCE, perhaps by Philoxenos of Eretria or Helen of Egypt. Entire panel 8'10" × 17' (2.7 × 5.2 m). Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.

and festivals—and Pausias—the foremost painter of his day. Pausias challenged Glykera to a contest, claiming that he could paint a picture of one of her complex works that would appear as lifelike to the spectator as her real one. According to the legend, he succeeded. It is not surprising, although perhaps unfair, that the opulent floral borders so popular in later Greek painting and mosaics are described as “Pausian” rather than “Glykeran.”

A Pausian design frames a mosaic floor from a palace at Pella (Macedonia), dated about 300 BCE (**FIG. 5-57**). The floor features a series of hunting scenes, such as the *Stag Hunt* seen here, prominently signed by an artist named Gnosis. The blossoms, leaves, spiraling tendrils, and twisting, undulating stems that frame this scene, echo the linear patterns formed by the



5-57 • Gnosis STAG HUNT

Detail of mosaic floor decoration from Pella, Macedonia (in present-day Greece). 300 BCE. Pebbles, central panel 10'7½" × 10'5" (3.24 × 3.17 m). Signed at top: “Gnosis made it.” Archaeological Museum, Pella.

hunters, the dog, and the struggling stag. The human and animal figures are modeled in light and shade, and the dog's front legs are expertly foreshortened to create the illusion that the animal is turning at a sharp angle into the picture. The work is all the more impressive because it was not made with uniformly cut marble in different colors, but with a carefully selected assortment of natural pebbles.

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD, 323–31/30 BCE

When Alexander died unexpectedly at age 33 in 323 BCE, he left a vast empire with no administrative structure and no accepted successor. Almost immediately his generals turned against one another, local leaders fought to regain their lost autonomy, and the empire began to break apart. By the early third century BCE, three of Alexander's generals—Antigonos, Ptolemy, and Seleucus—had carved out kingdoms. The Antigonids controlled Macedonia and mainland Greece; the Ptolemies ruled Egypt; and the Seleucids controlled Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Persia.

Over the course of the second and first centuries BCE, these kingdoms succumbed to the growing empire centered in Rome. Ptolemaic Egypt endured the longest, and its capital Alexandria, flourished as a prosperous seaport and great center of learning and the arts. Its library is estimated to have contained 700,000 papyrus and parchment scrolls. The Battle of Actium in 31 BCE and the death in 30 BCE of Egypt's last Ptolemaic ruler, the remarkable Cleopatra, marks the end of the Hellenistic period.

Alexander's lasting legacy was the spread of Greek culture far beyond its original borders, but artists of the Hellenistic period

developed visions discernibly distinct from those of their Classical Greek predecessors. Where earlier artists sought to codify a generalized artistic ideal, Hellenistic artists shifted focus to the individual and the specific. They turned increasingly away from the heroic to the everyday, from gods to mortals, from aloof serenity to individual emotion, and from decorous drama to emotional melodrama. Their works appeal to the senses through luscious or lustrous surface treatments and to our hearts as well as our intellects through expressive subjects and poses. Although such tendencies are already evident during the fourth century BCE, they become more pronounced in Hellenistic art.

THE CORINTHIAN ORDER IN HELLENISTIC ARCHITECTURE

In the architecture of the Hellenistic period, a variant of the Ionic order that had previously been reserved for interiors—called Corinthian by the Romans and featuring elaborate foliate capitals—challenged the dominant Doric and Ionic orders (see “The Greek Orders,” page 110). In Corinthian capitals, curly acanthus leaves and coiled flower spikes surround a basket-shaped core. Above the capitals, the Corinthian entablature, like the Ionic, has a stepped-out architrave and a continuous frieze, but it includes additional bands of carved moldings.

The Corinthian **TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS**, located in the lower city of Athens at the foot of the Akropolis, was designed by the Roman architect Cossutius in the second century BCE (**FIG. 5-58**) on the foundations of an earlier Doric temple, but it was not completed until three centuries later, under the patronage of the Roman emperor Hadrian. Viewed through these huge columns—55 feet 5 inches tall—the Parthenon seems modest in comparison. But the new temple followed long-established

5-58 • TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS, ATHENS

View from the southeast with the Akropolis in the distance. Building and rebuilding phases: foundation c. 520–510 BCE, using the Doric order; temple designed by Cossutius begun 175 BCE; left unfinished 164 BC; completed 132 CE using Cossutius' design. Height of columns 55'5" (16.89 m).



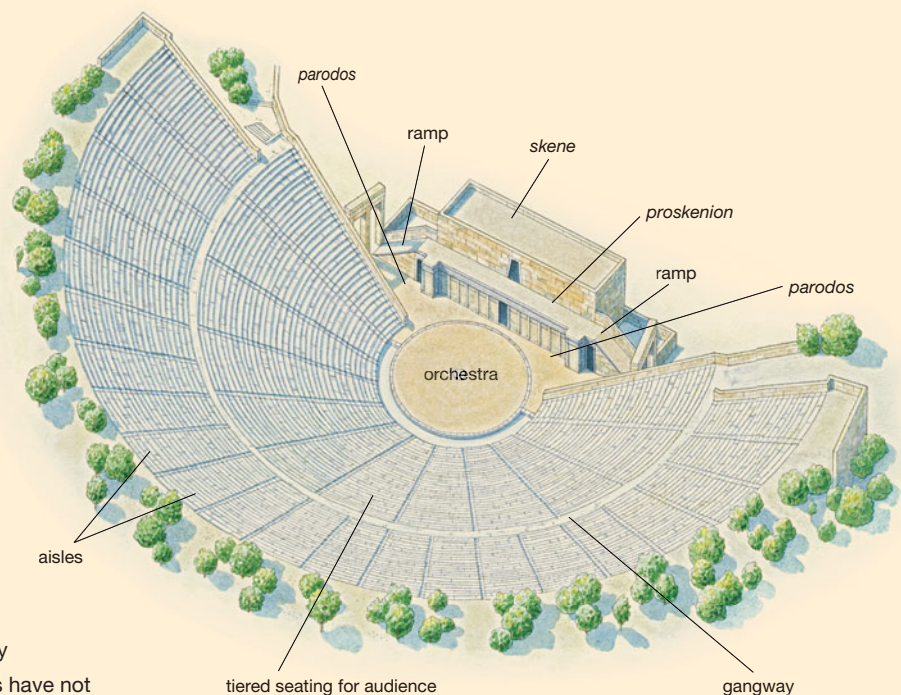


5-59 • OVERALL VIEW (A) AND RECONSTRUCTION DRAWING (B) OF THE THEATER, EPIDAUROS
Peloponnese, Greece.
Fourth century BCE and later.

In ancient Greece, the theater was more than mere entertainment: It was a vehicle for the communal expression of religious beliefs through music, poetry, and dance. In very early times, theater performances took place on the hard-packed dirt or stone-surfaced pavement of an outdoor threshing floor—the same type of floor later incorporated into religious sanctuaries. Whenever feasible, dramas were also presented facing a steep hill that served as elevated seating for the audience. Eventually such sites were made into permanent open-air auditoriums. At first, tiers of seats were simply cut into the side of the hill. Later, builders improved them with stone.

During the fifth century BCE, the plays were usually tragedies in verse based on popular myths, and were performed at festivals dedicated to Dionysos; the three great Greek tragedians—Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides—created works that would define tragedy for centuries. Because they were used continuously and frequently modified over many centuries, early theaters have not survived in their original form.

The theater at Epidauros (FIG. 5-59), built in the second half of the fourth century BCE, is characteristic. A semicircle of tiered seats built into the hillside overlooked the circular performance area, called the orchestra, at the center of which was an altar to Dionysos. Rising behind the orchestra was a two-tiered stage structure made up of the vertical *skene* (scene)—an architectural backdrop for performances that also screened the backstage area from view—and the *proskenion* (*proscenium*), a raised platform in front of the *skene* that was



increasingly used over time as an extension of the orchestra. Ramps connecting the *proskenion* with lateral passageways provided access for performers. Steps gave the audience access to the 55 rows of seats and divided the seating area into uniform wedge-shaped sections. The tiers of seats above the wide corridor, or gangway, were added at a much later date. This design provided uninterrupted sight lines and good acoustics, and allowed for the efficient entrance and exit of the 12,000 spectators. No better design has ever been created.

conventions. It was an enclosed rectangular building surrounded by a screen of columns standing on a three-stepped base. It is, quite simply, a Greek temple grown very large.

SCULPTURE

Hellenistic sculptors produced an enormous variety of work in a wide range of materials, techniques, and styles. The period was marked by two broad and conflicting trends. One trend emulated earlier Classical models; sculptors selected aspects of favored works of the fourth century BCE and incorporated them into their own work. The other (sometimes called anti-Classical or Baroque) abandoned Classical strictures and experimented freely with new forms and subjects. This style was especially strong in Pergamon and other eastern centers of Greek culture.

PERGAMON Pergamon—capital of a breakaway state within the Seleucid realm established in the early third century BCE—quickly became a leading center of the arts and the hub of an experimental sculptural style that had far-reaching influence throughout the Hellenistic period. This radical style characterizes a monument com-

memorating the victory in 230 BCE of Attalos I (ruled 241–197 BCE) over the Gauls, a Celtic people (see “The Celts,” page 150). The monument extols the dignity and heroism of the defeated enemies and, by extension, the power and virtue of the Pergamenes.

The bronze figures of Gauls mounted on the pedestal of this monument are known today only from Roman copies in marble. One captures the slow demise of a wounded Celtic soldier-trumpeter (**FIG. 5-60**), whose lime-spiked hair, mustache, and twisted neck ring or **torc** (reputedly the only thing the Gauls wore into battle) identify him as a **barbarian** (a label the ancient Greeks used for all foreigners, whom they considered uncivilized). But the sculpture also depicts his dignity and heroism in defeat, inspiring in viewers both admiration and pity for this fallen warrior. Fatally injured, he struggles to rise, but the slight bowing of his supporting right arm and his unseeing, downcast gaze indicate that he is on the point of death. This kind of deliberate attempt to elicit a specific emotional response in the viewer is known as **expressionism**, and it was to become a characteristic of Hellenistic art.

The sculptural style and approach seen in the monument to the defeated Gauls became more pronounced and dramatic in later



5-60 • EPIGONOS (?) DYING GALLIC TRUMPETER

Roman copy (found in Julius Caesar's garden in Rome) after the original bronze of c. 220 BCE. Marble, height 36½" (93 cm). Museo Capitolino, Rome.

Pliny the Elder described a work like the *Dying Gallic Trumpeter*, attributing it to an artist named Epigonos. Recent research indicates that Epigonos probably knew the early fifth-century BCE sculpture of the Temple of Aphaia on Aegina, which included the *Dying Warriors* (see FIGS. 5-14, 5-15), and could have had it in mind when he created his own works.

During the first millennium BCE, Celtic peoples inhabited most of central and western Europe. The Celtic Gauls portrayed in the Hellenistic Pergamene victory monument (see FIG. 5–60) moved into Asia Minor from Thrace during the third century BCE. The ancient Greeks referred to these neighbors, like all outsiders, as barbarians. Pushed out by migrating people, attacked and defeated by challenged kingdoms like that at Pergamon, and then by the Roman armies of Julius Caesar, the Celts were pushed into the northwesternmost parts of the continent—Ireland, Cornwall, and Brittany. Their wooden sculpture and dwellings and their colorful woven textiles have disintegrated, but spectacular funerary goods such as jewelry, weapons, and tableware survive.

This golden **TORC**, dating sometime between the third and first centuries BCE (FIG. 5–61), was excavated in 1866 from a Celtic tomb in

northern France, but it is strikingly similar to the neck ring worn by the dying trumpeter illustrated in FIGURE 5–60. Torcs were worn by noblemen and were sometimes awarded to warriors for heroic performance in combat. Like all Celtic jewelry, the decorative design of this work consists not of natural forms but of completely abstract ornament, in this case created by the careful twisting and wrapping of strands of pure gold, resolved securely by the definitive bulges of two knobs. In Celtic hands, pattern becomes an integral part of the object itself, not an applied decoration. In stark contrast to the culture of the ancient Greeks, where the human figure was at the heart of all artistic development, here it is abstract, non-representational form and its continual refinement that is the central artistic preoccupation.



5–61 • TORC

Found at Soucy, France. Celtic Gaul, 3rd–1st century BCE. Gold, height 5" × length 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (12.7 × 14.5 cm). Musée Nationale du Moyen-Âge, Paris.

works, culminating in the sculptured frieze wrapped around the base of a Great Altar on a mountainside at Pergamon (FIG. 5–62). Now reconstructed inside a Berlin museum, the original altar was enclosed within a single-story Ionic colonnade raised on a high podium reached by a monumental staircase 68 feet wide and nearly 30 feet deep. The sculptural frieze, over 7 feet in height, probably executed during the reign of Eumenes II (197–159 BCE), depicts the battle between the gods and the giants, a mythical struggle that the Greeks saw as a metaphor for their conflicts with outsiders, all of whom they labeled barbarians. In this case it evokes the Pergamenes' victory over the Gauls.

The Greek gods fight here not only with giants, but also with monsters with snakes for legs emerging from the bowels of the earth. In this detail (FIG. 5–63), the goddess Athena at the left has

grabbed the hair of a winged male monster and forced him to his knees. Inscriptions along the base of the sculpture identify him as Alkyoneos, a son of the earth goddess Ge. Ge rises from the ground on the right in fear as she reaches toward Athena, pleading for her son's life. At the far right, a winged Nike rushes to crown Athena with a victor's wreath.

The figures in the Pergamon frieze not only fill the space along the base of the altar, they also break out of their architectural boundaries and invade the spectators' space, crawling out onto the steps that visitors climbed on their way to the altar. Many consider this theatrical and complex interaction of space and form to be a benchmark of the Hellenistic style, just as they consider the balanced restraint of the Parthenon sculpture to be the epitome of the High Classical style. Where fifth-century BCE artists sought